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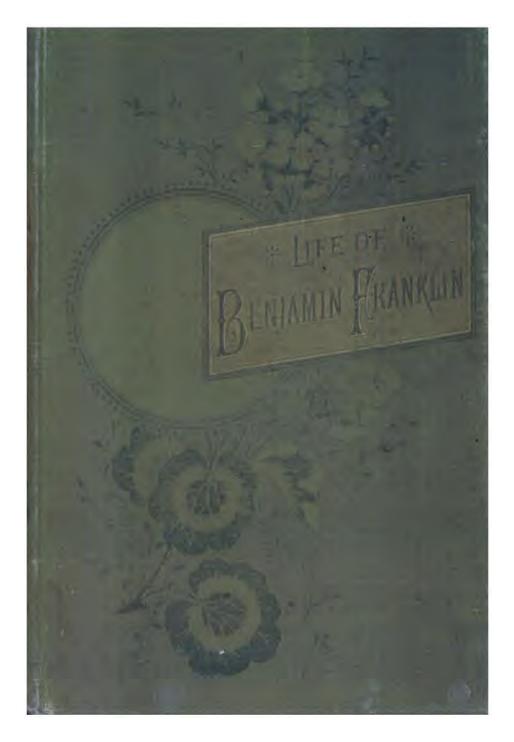
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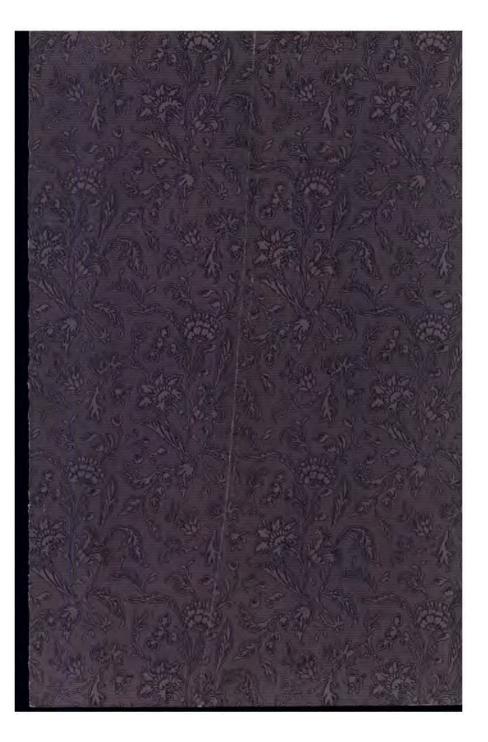
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### THE LIFE

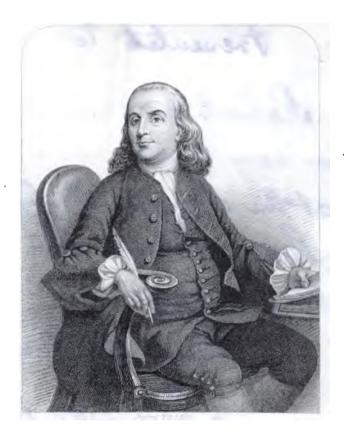
OF

### BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

This One



Presented to Robert Johnson for very regular attendance at the dougton Makyan Sunday School during theyear 1891. James Teigh Super Jebruary 28. 1892



Beng. Franklin

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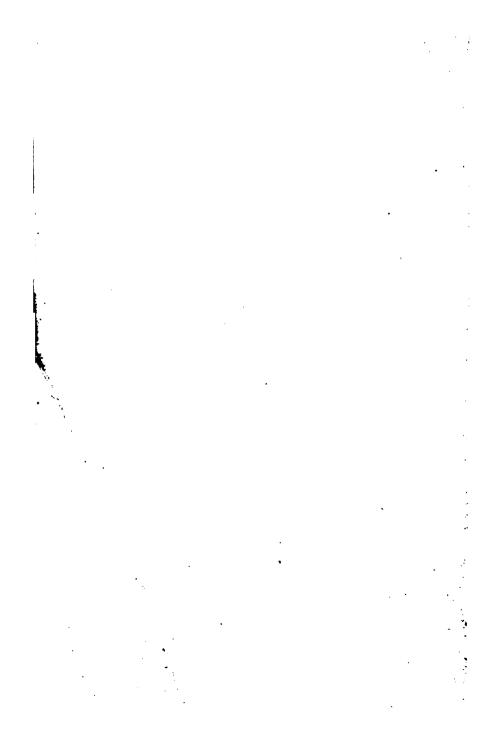
## LIFE

ΟF

# Benjamin Franklin



W&R CHAMBERS,
LONDON & EDINBURGH,
1887.





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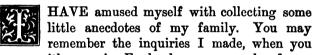
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### LIFE OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

### CHAPTER L

EARLY LIFE.



were with me in England, among such of my relations as were then living; and the journey I undertook for that purpose. To be acquainted with the particulars of my parentage and life, many of which are unknown to you, I flatter myself will afford the same pleasure to you as to me. I shall now relate them: it will be an agreeable employment of a week's uninterrupted leisure, which I promise myself during my present retirement in the country. There are also other motives which induce me to the undertaking. From the bosom of poverty and obscurity, in which I drew my first breath and spent my earliest years, I have raised myself to a state of opulence and to some degree of celebrity in

the world. A constant good fortune has attended me through every period of life to my present advanced age; and my descendants may be desirous of learning what were the means of which I made use, and which, thanks to the assisting hand of Providence, have proved so eminently successful. They may also, should they ever be placed in a similar situation, derive some advantage from my narrative.

When I reflect, as I frequently do, upon the felicity I have enjoyed, I sometimes say to myself. that, were the offer made to me, I would engage to run again from beginning to end the same career of life. All I would ask should be the privilege of an author to correct in a second edition certain errors of the first. I could wish, likewise, if it were in my power, to change some trivial incidents and events for others more favourable. Were this. however, denied me, still would I not decline the offer. But since a repetition of life cannot take place, there is nothing which, in my opinion, so nearly resembles it as to call to mind all its circumstances, and, to render their remembrance more durable, commit them to writing. By thus employing myself, I shall yield to the inclination, so natural in old men, to talk of themselves and their exploits. and may freely follow my bent, without being tiresome to those who, from respect to my age, might think themselves obliged to listen to me; as they will be at liberty to read me or not as they please.

In fine—and I may as well avow it, since nobody

would believe me were I to deny it—I shall, perhaps, by this employment gratify my vanity. Scarcely, indeed, have I ever heard or read the introductory phrase, 'I may say without vanity,' but some striking and characteristic instance of vanity has immediately followed. The generality of men hate vanity in others, however strongly they may be tinctured with it themselves; for myself, I pay obeisance to it wherever I meet with it, persuaded that it is advantageous as well to the individual whom it governs as to those who are within the sphere of Of consequence, it would in many its influence. cases not be wholly absurd that a man should count his vanity among the other sweets of life, and give thanks to Providence for the blessing.

And here let me with all humility acknowledge that to Divine Providence I am indebted for the felicity I have hitherto enjoyed. It is that Power alone which has furnished me with the means I have employed, and that has crowned them with success. My faith in this respect leads me to hope, though I cannot count upon it, that the Divine goodness will still be exercised towards me; either by prolonging the duration of my happiness to the close of life, or by giving me fortitude to support any melancholy reverse which may happen to me as to so many others. My future fortune is unknown but to Him in whose hand is our destiny, and who can make our very afflictions subservient to our benefit.

One of my uncles, desirous, like myself, of collecting anecdotes of our family, gave me some notes, from which I have derived many particulars respect-

ing our ancestors. From these I learn that they had lived in the same village (Eaton, in Northamptonshire), upon a freehold of about thirty acres, for the space at least of three hundred years. How long they had resided there prior to that period my uncle had been unable to discover; probably ever since the institution of surnames, when they took the appellation of Franklin, which had formerly been the name of a particular order of individuals.\*

This petty estate would not have sufficed for their subsistence had they not added the trade of blacksmith, which was perpetuated in the family down to my uncle's time, the eldest son having been uniformly brought up to this employment—a custom which both he and my father observed with respect to their eldest sons.

In the researches I made at Eaton, I found no account of their births, marriages, and deaths earlier than the year 1555, the parish register not extending further back than that period. This register informed me that I was the youngest son of the youngest branch of the family, counting five generations. My grandfather, Thomas, was born in 1598; lived at Eaton till he was too old to continue his

\* In early times in England, franklin was a title of honour, equivalent to the term country gentleman. Chaucer calls his country gentleman a franklin; and, after describing his good housekeeping, thus characterises him:

This worthy franklin bore a purse of silk Fixed to his girdle, white as morning milk; Knight of the shire, first justice at th' assize, To help the poor, the doubtful to advise. In all employments generous, just, he proved, Renowned for courtesy, by all beloved.

trade, when he retired to Banbury, in Oxfordshire, where his son John, who was a dyer, resided, and with whom my father was apprenticed. He died and was buried there; we saw his monument in 1758. His eldest son lived in the family house at Eaton, which he bequeathed, with the land belonging to it, to his only daughter, who, in concert with her husband, Mr Fisher of Wellingborough, afterwards sold it to Mr Estead, the present proprietor.

My grandfather had four surviving sons, Thomas, John, Benjamin, and Josias. I shall give you such particulars of them as my memory will furnish, not having my papers here, in which you will find a more minute account, if they are not lost during my absence.

Thomas had learned the trade of a blacksmith under his father; but possessing a good natural understanding, he improved it by study, at the solicitation of a gentleman of the name of Palmer. who was at that time the principal inhabitant of the village, and who encouraged in like manner all my uncles to cultivate their minds. Thomas thus rendered himself competent to the functions of a country attorney; soon became an essential personage in the affairs of the village; and was one of the chief movers of every public enterprise, as well relative to the county as the town of Northampton. A variety of remarkable incidents were told us of After enjoying the esteem and him at Eaton. patronage of Lord Halifax, he died January 6, 1702, precisely four years before I was born. The recital that was made us of his life and character, by some

aged persons of the village, struck you, I remember, as extraordinary from its analogy to what you knew of myself. 'Had he died,' said you, 'just four years later, one would have supposed a transmigration of souls.'

John, to the best of my belief, was brought up to the trade of a wool-dyer. Benjamin served his apprenticeship in London to a silk-dyer. He was an industrious man. I remember him well: for. while I was a child, he joined my father at Boston, and lived for some years in the house with us. particular affection had always subsisted between my father and him; and I was his godson. arrived to a great age. He left behind him two quarto volumes of poems in manuscript, consisting of little fugitive pieces addressed to his friends. had invented a shorthand, which he taught me, but having never made use of it, I have now forgotten it. He was a man of piety, and a constant attendant on the best preachers, whose sermons he took a pleasure in writing down according to the expeditory method he had devised. Many volumes were thus collected by him. He was also extremely fond of politics; too much so, perhaps, for his situation. lately found in London a collection which he had made of all the principal pamphlets relative to public affairs from the year 1641 to 1717. Many volumes are wanting, as appears by the series of numbers; but there still remain eight in folio, and twenty-four in quarto and octavo. The collection had fallen into the hands of a second-hand bookseller, who, knowing me by having sold me some books, brought it to me. My uncle, it seems, had left it behind him on his departure for America about fifty years ago. I found various notes of his writing in the margins. His grandson, Samuel, is now living at Boston.

Our humble family had early embraced the principles of the Reformation. They remained faithfully attached during the reign of Queen Mary, when they were in danger of being molested on account of their zeal against popery. They had an English Bible, and to conceal it the more securely, they conceived the project of fastening it open, with packthreads across the leaves, on the inside of the lid of a homely domestic utensil. When my grandfather wished to read to his family, he reversed the lid of the utensil upon his knees, and passed the leaves from one side to the other, which were held down on each by the packthread. One of the children was stationed at the door, to give notice if he saw the proctor (an officer of the spiritual court) make his appearance; in that case, the lid was restored to its place, with the Bible concealed under it as before. I had this anecdote from my uncle Benjamin.

The whole family preserved its attachment to the Church of England till towards the close of the reign of Charles II., when certain ministers who had been rejected as nonconformists, having held conventicles in Northamptonshire, were joined by Benjamin and Josias, who adhered to them ever after. The rest of the family continued in the Episcopal Church.

My father, Josias, married early in life. He went,

with his wife and three children, to New England about the year 1682. Conventicles being at that time prohibited by law and frequently disturbed, some considerable persons of his acquaintance determined to go to America, where they hoped to enjoy the free exercise of their religion, and my father was prevailed on to accompany them.

My father had also by the same wife four children born in America, and ten others by a second wife. making in all seventeen. I remember to have seen thirteen seated together at his table, who all arrived at years of maturity, and were married. I was the last of the sons, and the youngest child excepting two daughters. I was born at Boston, in New England. on the 17th of January 1706. My mother, the second wife, was Abiah Folger, daughter of Peter Folger, one of the first colonists of New England, of whom Cotton Mather makes honourable mention in his Ecclesiastical History of that province, as 'a pious and learned Englishman, if I rightly recollect his expressions. I have been told of his having written a variety of little pieces; but there appears to be only one in print, which I met with many years ago. It was published in the year 1675, and is in familiar verse, agreeably to the taste of the times and the country. The author addresses himself to the governors for the time being, speaks for liberty of conscience, and in favour of the Anabaptists, Quakers, and other sectaries who had suffered persecution. To this persecution he attributes the wars with the natives and other calamities which afflicted the country, regarding them as the judgments of God

in punishment of so odious an offence, and he exhorts the government to the repeal of laws so contrary to charity. The poem appeared to be written with a manly freedom and a pleasing simplicity. I recollect the six concluding lines, though I have forgotten the order of words of the first two; the sense of which was that his censures were dictated by benevolence, and that, of consequence, he wished to be known as the author; 'because,' said he, 'I hate from my very soul dissimulation.'

Because to be a libeller
I hate it with my heart.
From Sherborn Town\* where now I dwell,
My name I do put here;
Without offence your real friend,
It is Peter Folger.

My brothers were all put apprentices to different trades. With respect to myself, I was sent at the age of eight years to a grammar-school. My father destined me for the church, and already regarded me as the chaplain of the family. The promptitude with which from my infancy I had learned to read—for I do not remember to have been ever without this acquirement—and the encouragement of his friends, who assured him that I should one day certainly become a man of letters, confirmed him in this design. My uncle Benjamin approved also of the scheme, and promised to give me all his volumes of sermons, written as I have said in the

<sup>\*</sup> In the island of Nantucket.

shorthand of his invention, if I would take the pains to learn it.

'I remained, however, scarcely a year at the grammar-school, although in this short interval I had risen from the middle to the head of my class, from thence to the class immediately above, and was to pass at the end of the year to the one next in order. But my father, burdened with a numerous family, found that he was incapable, without subjecting himself to difficulties, of providing for the expenses of a collegiate education; and considering, besides, as I heard him say to his friends, that persons so educated were often poorly provided for he renounced his first intentions took me from the grammar-school, and sent me to a school for writing and arithmetic, kept by a Mr George Brownwell, who was a skilful master, and succeeded very well in his profession by employing gentle means only, and such as were calculated to encourage his scholars. Under him I soon acquired an excellent hand; but I failed in arithmetic, and made therein no sort of progress.

At ten years of age I was called home to assist my father in his occupation, which was that of soapboiler and tallow-chandler—a business to which he had served no apprenticeship, but which he embraced on his arrival in New England, because he found his own—that of dyer—in too little request to enable him to maintain his family. I was accordingly employed in cutting the wicks, filling the moulds, taking care of the shop, carrying messages, &c.

This business displeased me, and I felt a strong

inclination for a sea-life; but my father set his face against it. The vicinity of the water, however, gave me frequent opportunities of venturing myself both upon and within it, and I soon acquired the art of swimming and of managing a boat. When embarked with other children, the helm was commonly deputed to me, particularly on difficult occasions; and in every other project I was almost always the leader of the troop, whom I sometimes involved in embarrassments. I shall give an instance of this, which demonstrates an early disposition of mind for public enterprises, though the one in question was not conducted by justice.

The millpond was terminated on one side by a marsh, upon the borders of which we were accustomed to take our stand at high-water to angle for small fish. By dint of walking we had converted the place into a perfect quagmire. My proposal was to erect a wharf that should afford us firm footing: and I pointed out to my companions a large heap of stones, intended for building a new house near the marsh, and which were well adapted for our purpose. Accordingly, when the workmen retired in the evening, I assembled a number of my playfellows. and by labouring diligently like ants, sometimes four of us uniting our strength to carry a single stone, we removed them all, and constructed our little quay. The workmen were surprised the next morning at not finding their stones, which had been conveved to our wharf. Inquiries were made respecting the authors of this conveyance; we were discovered; complaints were exhibited against us;

and many of us underwent correction on the part of our parents; and though I strenuously defended the utility of the work, my father at length convinced me that nothing which was not strictly honest could be useful.

It will not perhaps be uninteresting to you to know what sort of a man my father was. an excellent constitution, was of a middle size, but well made and strong, and extremely active in whatever he undertook. He designed with a degree of neatness, and knew a little of music. was sonorous and agreeable; so that when he sung a psalm or hymn with the accompaniment of his violin, as was his frequent practice in an evening, when the labours of the day were finished, it was truly delightful to hear him. He was versed also in mechanics, and could upon occasion use the tools of a variety of trades. But his greatest excellence was a sound understanding and solid judgment in matters of prudence, both in public and private life. the former, indeed, he never engaged, because his numerous family and the mediocrity of his fortune kept him unremittingly employed in the duties of his profession. But I well remember that the leading men of the place used frequently to come and ask his advice respecting the affairs of the town, or of the church to which he belonged, and that they paid much deference to his opinion. Individuals were also in the habit of consulting him in their private affairs, and he was often chosen arbiter between contending parties.

He was fond of having at his table as often as

possible some friends or well-informed neighbours capable of rational conversation; and he was always careful to introduce useful or ingenious topics of discourse, which might tend to form the minds of his children. By this means he early attracted our attention to what was just, prudent, and beneficial in the conduct of life. He never talked of the meats which appeared upon the table, never discussed whether they were well or ill dressed, of a good or bad flavour, high seasoned or otherwise, preferable or inferior to this or that dish of a similar kind. Thus accustomed from my infancy to the utmost inattention as to these objects, I have been perfectly regardless of what kind of food was before me; and I pay so little attention to it even now, that it would be a hard matter for me to recollect, a few hours after I had dined, of what my dinner had consisted. When travelling, I have particularly experienced the advantage of this habit; for it has often happened to me to be in company with persons who, having a more delicate, because a more exercised taste, have suffered in many cases considerable inconvenience, while as to myself I have had nothing to desire.

My mother was likewise possessed of an excellent constitution. She suckled all her ten children, and I never heard either her or my father complain of any other disorder than that of which they died: my father at the age of eighty-nine, and my mother at eighty-five. They are buried together at Boston, where, a few years ago, I placed a marble over their grave, with this inscription:

'Here lie Josias Franklin and Abiah his wife.

They lived together with reciprocal affection for fifty-five years; and without private fortune, without lucrative employment, by assiduous labour and honest industry, decently supported a numerous family, and educated with success thirteen children and seven grandchildren. Let this example, reader, encourage thee diligently to discharge the duties of thy calling, and to rely on the support of Divine Providence. He was pious and prudent; she, discreet and virtuous. Their youngest son, from a sentiment of filial duty, consecrates this stone to their memory.'

I perceive, by my rambling digressions, that I am growing old. But we do not dress for a private company as for a formal ball. This deserves perhaps the name of negligence.

To return to my own narrative. I continued employed in my father's trade for the space of two years; that is to say, till I arrived at twelve years About this time, my brother John, who had served his apprenticeship in London, having quitted my father, and being married and settled in business on his own account at Rhode Island, I was destined. to all appearance, to supply his place, and be a candlemaker all my life; but my dislike of this occupation continuing, my father was apprehensive that, if a more agreeable one were not offered me. I might play the truant and escape to sea; as, to his extreme mortification, my brother Josias had done. He therefore took me sometimes to see masons. coopers, braziers, joiners, and other mechanics employed at their work, in order to discover the bent of my inclination, and fix it, if he could, upon some occupation that might retain me on shore. I have since, in consequence of these visits, derived no small pleasure from seeing skilful workmen handle their tools; and it has proved of considerable benefit to have acquired thereby sufficient knowledge to be able to make little things for myself, when I have had no mechanic at hand, and to construct small machines for my experiments, while the idea I have conceived has been fresh and strongly impressed on my imagination.

My father at length decided that I should be a cutler, and I was placed for some days upon trial with my cousin Samuel, son of my uncle Benjamin, who had learned this trade in London, and had established himself at Boston. But the premium he required for my apprenticeship displeasing my father, I was recalled home.

From my earliest years, I had been passionately fond of reading; and I had laid out in books all the money I could procure. I was particularly pleased with accounts of voyages. My first acquisition was Bunyan's collection in small separate volumes. These I afterwards sold, in order to buy an historical collection by R. Burton, which consisted of small cheap volumes, amounting in all to about forty or fifty. My father's little library was principally made up of books of practical and polemical theology. I read the greatest part of them. I have since often regretted that at a time when I had so great a thirst for knowledge, more eligible books had not fallen into my hands, as it was then a point decided that

I should not be educated for the church. There was also among my father's books Plutarch's *Lives*, in which I read continually, and I still regard as advantageously employed the time I devoted to them. I found, besides, a work of De Foe's entitled an *Essay on Projects*, from which, perhaps, I derived impressions that have since influenced some of the principal events of my life.





### CHAPTER II.

#### APPRENTICED TO THE PRINTING TRADE.

Y inclination for books at last determined my father to make me a printer, though he had already a son in that profession. My

brother had returned from England in 1717 with a press and types, in order to establish a printing-house at Boston. This business pleased me much better than that of my father, though I had still a predilection for the sea. To prevent the effects which might result from this inclination, my father was impatient to see me engaged with my brother. I held back for some time; at length, however, I suffered myself to be persuaded, and signed my indentures, being then only twelve years of age. It was agreed that I should serve as apprentice to the age of twenty-one, and should receive journeyman's wages only during the last year.

In a very short time I made great proficiency in this business, and became very serviceable to my brother. I had now an opportunity of procuring better books. The acquaintance I necessarily formed with booksellers' apprentices enabled me to borrow a volume now and then, which I never failed to

return punctually and without injury. How often has it happened to me to pass the greater part of the night in reading by my bedside, when the book had been lent me in the evening, and was to be returned the next morning, lest it might be missed or wanted.

At length, Mr Matthew Adams, an ingenious tradesman, who had a handsome collection of books, and who frequented our printing-house, took notice of me. He invited me to see his library, and had the goodness to lend me any books I was desirous of reading. I then took a strange fancy for poetry. and composed several little pieces. My brother, thinking he might find his account in it, encouraged me, and engaged me to write two ballads. One, called The Lighthouse Tragedy, contained an account of the shipwreck of Captain Worthilake and his two daughters; the other was a sailor's song on the capture of the noted pirate called Teach, or Black-They were wretched verses in point of style—mere blind men's ditties. When printed, he despatched me about the town to sell them. The first had a prodigious run, because the event was recent and had made a great noise.

My vanity was flattered by this success; but my father checked my exultation by ridiculing my productions and telling me that versifiers were always poor. I thus escaped the misfortune of being a very wretched poet. But as the faculty of writing prose has been of great service to me in the course of my life, and principally contributed to my advancement, I shall relate by what means, situated

as I was, I acquired the small skill I may possess in that way.

There was in the town another young man, a great lover of books, of the name of John Collins, with whom I was intimately connected. We frequently engaged in dispute, and were indeed so fond of argumentation, that nothing was so agreeable to us as a war of words. This contentious temper, I would observe by-the-bye, is in danger of becoming a very bad habit, and frequently renders a man's company insupportable, as being no otherwise capable of indulgence than by an indiscriminate contradiction. independently of the acrimony and discord it introduces into conversation; and is often productive of dislike, and even hatred, between persons to whom friendship is indispensably necessary. I acquired it by reading, while I lived with my father, books of religious controversy. I have since remarked that men of sense seldom fall into this error; lawyers, fellows of universities, and persons of every profession educated at Edinburgh, excepted.

Collins and I fell one day into an argument relative to the education of women; namely, whether it was proper to instruct them in the sciences, and whether they were competent to the study. Collins supported the negative, and affirmed that the task was beyond their capacity; I maintained the opposite opinion, a little, perhaps, for the pleasure of disputing. He was naturally more eloquent than I; words flowed copiously from his lips; and frequently I thought myself vanquished, more by his volubility than by the force of his argument. We separated without

coming to an agreement upon this point; and as we were not to see each other again for some time, I committed my thoughts to paper, made a fair copy. and sent it to him. He answered, and I replied. Three or four letters had been written by each, when my father chanced to light upon my papers and read Without entering into the merits of the cause, he embraced the opportunity of speaking to me upon my manner of writing. He observed that though I had the advantage of my adversary in correct spelling and pointing, which I owed to my occupation, I was greatly his inferior in elegance of expression, in arrangement, and perspicuity. Of this he convinced me by several examples. I felt the justice of his remarks, became more attentive to language, and resolved to make every effort to improve my style.

Amidst these resolves, an odd volume of the Spectator fell into my hands. This was a publication I had never seen. I bought the volume, and read it again and again. I was enchanted with it, thought the style excellent, and wished it were in my power to imitate it. With this view, I selected some of the papers, made short summaries of the sense of each period, and put them for a few days aside. I then, without looking at the book, endeavoured to restore the essays to their due form, and to express each thought at length, as it was in the original, employing the most appropriate words that occurred to my mind. I afterwards compared my Spectator with the original. I perceived some faults, which I corrected; but I found that I wanted a fund of

words, if I may so express myself, and a facility of recollecting and employing them, which I thought I should by that time have acquired, had I continued to make verses. The continual need of words of the same meaning, but of different lengths for the measure, or of different sounds for the rhyme, would have obliged me to seek for a variety of synonyms, and have rendered me master of them. From this belief, I took some of the tales of the Spectator and turned them into verse; and after a time, when I had sufficiently forgotten them, I again converted them into prose.

Sometimes, also, I mingled all my summaries together; and a few weeks after, endeavoured to arrange them in the best order, before I attempted to form the periods and complete the essays. This I did with a view of acquiring method in the arrangement of my thoughts. On comparing afterwards my performance with the original, many faults were apparent, which I corrected; but I had sometimes the satisfaction to think that, in certain particulars of little importance, I had been fortunate enough to improve the order of thought or the style; and this encouraged me to hope that I should succeed in time in writing decently in the English language, which was one of the great objects of my ambition. time which I devoted to these exercises and to reading was the evening after my day's labour was finished, the morning before it began, and on Sundays.

When about sixteen years of age, a work of Tryon fell into my hands in which he recommends vege-

table diet. I determined to observe it. My brother being a bachelor, did not keep house, but boarded with his apprentices in a neighbouring family. My refusing to eat animal food was found inconvenient, and I was often scolded for my singularity. attended to the mode in which Tryon prepared some of his dishes, particularly how to boil potatoes and rice and make hasty-puddings. I then said to my brother, that if he would allow me per week half what he paid for my board, I would undertake to maintain myself. The offer was instantly embraced; and I soon found that of what he gave me I was able to save half. This was a new fund for the purchase of books; and other advantages resulted to me from the plan. When my brother and his workmen left the printing-house to go to dinner, I remained behind, and despatching my frugal meal, which frequently consisted of a biscuit only, or a slice of bread and a bunch of raisins, or a bun from the pastrycook's, with a glass of water. I had the rest of the time till their return for study; and my progress therein was proportioned to that clearness of ideas and quickness of conception which are the fruit of temperance in eating and drinking.

It was about this period that, having one day been put to the blush for my ignorance in the art of calculation, which I had twice failed to learn while at school, I took Cocker's *Treatise of Arithmetic*, and went through it myself with the utmost ease. I also read a book of Navigation by Seller and Sturmy, and made myself master of the little geometry it contains; but I never proceeded far in

this science. Nearly at the same time I read Locke on The Human Understanding, and The Art of Thinking by Messrs du Port Royal.

While labouring to form and improve my style, I met with an English Grammar which I believe was Greenwood's, having at the end of it two little essays on rhetoric and logic. In the latter I found a model of disputation after the manner of Socrates. after, I procured Xenophon's work entitled Memorable Things of Socrates, in which are various examples of the same method. Charmed to a degree of enthusiasm with this mode of disputing, I adopted it, and renouncing blunt contradiction and direct and positive argument. I assumed the character of a humble questioner. The perusal of Shaftesbury and Collins had made me doubtful of various points of a religious nature; and I found Socrates's method of argument to be both the safest for myself, as well as the most embarrassing to those against whom I employed it. It soon afforded me singular pleasure. I incessantly practised it; and became very adroit in obtaining, even from persons of superior understanding, concessions of which they did not foresee the Thus I involved them in difficulties consequence. from which they were unable to extricate themselves. and sometimes obtained victories which neither my cause nor my arguments merited.

This method I continued to employ for some years; but I afterwards abandoned it by degrees, retaining only the habit of expressing myself with modest diffidence, and never making use, when I advanced any proposition which might be controverted, of the

words certainly, undoubtedly, or any others that might give the appearance of being obstinately attached to my opinion. I rather said, 'I imagine,' 'I suppose,' or, 'It appears to me that such a thing is so or so, for such and such reasons; 'or, 'It is so, if I am not mistaken.' This habit has, I think, been of considerable advantage to me when I have had occasion to impress my opinion on the minds of others, and persuade them to the adoption of the measures I have suggested. And since the chief ends of conversation are to inform or to be informed, to please or to persuade, I could wish that intelligent and wellmeaning men would not themselves diminish the power they possess of being useful, by a positive and presumptuous manner of expressing themselves, which scarcely ever fails to disgust the hearer, and is only calculated to excite opposition, and defeat every purpose for which the faculty of speech has been bestowed on man. In short, if you wish to inform, a positive and dogmatical manner of advancing your opinion may provoke contradiction, and prevent your being heard with attention. the other hand, if, with a desire of being informed, and of benefiting by the knowledge of others, you express yourself as being strongly attached to your own opinions, modest and sensible men, who do not love disputation, will leave you in tranquil possession of your errors. By following such a method, you can rarely hope to please your auditors, conciliate their good-will, or work conviction on those whom you may be desirous of gaining over to your views. Pope judiciously observes:

Men must be taught as if you taught them not, And things unknown proposed as things forgot.

And in the same poem he afterwards advises us

To speak, though sure, with seeming diffidence.

He might have added to these lines one that he has coupled elsewhere, in my opinion, with less propriety. It is this:

For want of modesty is want of sense.

If you ask why I say with 'less propriety,' I must give you the two lines together:

Immodest words admit of no defence, For want of modesty is want of sense.

Now, want of sense, when a man has the misfortune to be so circumstanced, is it not a kind of excuse for want of modesty? And would not the verses have been more accurate if they had been constructed thus?

Immodest words admit but this defence— That want of modesty is want of sense.

But I leave the decision of this to better judges than myself.

In 1720 or 1721, my brother began to print a new public paper. It was the second that made its appearance in America, and was entitled the New England Courant. The only one that existed before was the Boston News Letter. Some of his friends, I remember, would have dissuaded him from his undertaking, as a thing that was not likely to succeed, a single newspaper being in their opinion sufficient for all America. At present, however, in 1771, there are

no less than twenty-five. But he carried his project into execution, and I was employed in distributing the copies to his customers, after having assisted in composing and working them off.

Among his friends, he had a number of literary characters, who, as an amusement, wrote short essays for the paper, which gave it reputation and increased These gentlemen frequently came to our house. I heard the conversation that passed, and the accounts they gave of the favourable reception of their writings with the public. I was tempted to try my hand among them; but being still a child as it were, I was fearful that my brother might be unwilling to print in his paper any performance of which he should know me to be the author. fore contrived to disguise my hand; and having written an anonymous piece, I placed it at night under the door of the printing-house, where it was found the next morning. My brother communicated it to his friends, when they came as usual to see him, who read it, commented upon it within my hearing; and I had the exquisite pleasure to find that it met with their approbation, and that in their various conjectures they made respecting the author, no one was mentioned who did not enjoy a high reputation in the country for talents and genius. I now supposed myself fortunate in my judges, and began to suspect that they were not such excellent writers as I had hitherto supposed them. Be this as it may, encouraged by this little adventure, I wrote and sent to press in the same way many other pieces which were equally approved; keeping the secret till my slender stock of information and knowledge for such performances was pretty completely exhausted, when I made myself known.

My brother upon this discovery began to entertain a little more respect for me; but he still regarded himself as my master, and treated me as an appren-He thought himself entitled to the same services from me as from any other person. On the contrary, I conceived that in many instances he was too rigorous, and that on the part of a brother I had a right to expect greater indulgence. Our disputes were frequently brought before my father; and either my brother was generally in the wrong, or I was the better pleader of the two, for judgment was commonly given in my favour. But my brother was passionate, and often had recourse to blows-a circumstance which I took in very ill part. This severe and tyrannical treatment contributed, I believe, to imprint on my mind that aversion to arbitrary power which, during my whole life, I have ever preserved. My apprenticeship became insupportable to me, and I continually sighed for an opportunity of shortening it, which at length unexpectedly offered.

An article inserted in our paper upon some political subject which I have now forgotten, gave offence to the Assembly. My brother was taken into custody, censured, and ordered into confinement for a month, because, as I presume, he would not discover the author. I was also taken up, and examined before the Council; but though I gave them no satisfaction, they contented themselves with

reprimanding, and then dismissed me, considering me probably as bound, in quality of apprentice, to keep my master's secrets.

The imprisonment of my brother kindled my resentment, notwithstanding our private quarrels. During its continuance, the management of the paper was intrusted to me, and I was bold enough to insert some pasquinades against the governors, which highly pleased my brother; while others began to look upon me in an unfavourable point of view, considering me as a young wit, inclined to satire and lampoon.

My brother's enlargement was accompanied with an arbitrary order from the House of the Assembly. 'That James Franklin should no longer print the newspaper entitled the New England Courant.' this conjuncture we held a consultation of our friends at the printing-house, in order to determine what was to be done. Some proposed to evade the order by changing the title of the paper; but my brother, foreseeing inconveniences that would result from this step, thought it better that it should in future be printed in the name of Benjamin Franklin; and, to avoid the censure of the Assembly, who might charge him with still printing the paper himself under the name of his apprentice, it was resolved that my old indentures should be given up to me, with a full and entire discharge written on the back, in order to be produced upon an emergency; but that, to secure to my brother the benefit of my service, I should sign a new contract, which should be kept secret during the remainder of the term. This was a very shallow arrangement. It was, however, carried into immediate execution, and the paper continued in consequence to make its appearance for some months in my name. At length, a new difference arising between my brother and me, I ventured to take advantage of my liberty, presuming that he would not dare to produce the new contract. It was undoubtedly dishonourable to avail myself of this circumstance, and I reckon this action as one of the first errors of my life; but I was little capable of estimating it at its true value, imbittered as my mind had been by the recollection of the blows I had received. Exclusively of his passionate treatment of me, my brother was by no means a man of an ill temper, and perhaps my manners had too much impertinence not to afford it a very natural pretext.





## CHAPTER III.

## IN PHILADELPHIA.

HEN my brother knew that it was my deter-

mination to quit him, he wished to prevent my finding employment elsewhere. He went to all the printing-houses in the town and prejudiced the masters against me, who accordingly refused to employ me. The idea then suggested itself to me of going to New York, the nearest town in which there was a printing-office. Further reflection confirmed me in the design of leaving Boston, where I had already rendered myself an object of suspicion to the governing party. It was probable, from the arbitrary proceedings of the Assembly in the affair of my brother, that, by remaining, I should soon have been exposed to difficulties, which I had the greater reason to apprehend, as, from my indiscreet disputes upon the subject of religion, I began to be regarded by pious souls with horror, either as an apostate or an atheist. I came, therefore, to a resolution; but my father siding with my brother, I presumed that, if I attempted to depart openly, measures would be taken to prevent me. My friend Collins undertook to favour my flight, and agreed

for my passage with the captain of a New York sloop. I sold part of my books to procure a small sum of money, and went privately on board the sloop. By favour of a good wind, I found myself in three days at New York (1723), more than two hundred miles from my home, at the age only of seventeen years, without knowing an individual in the place, and with very little money in my pocket.

The inclination I had felt for a seafaring life was entirely subsided, or I should now have been able to gratify it; but having another trade, and believing myself to be a tolerable workman, I hesitated not to offer my services to old Mr William Bradford. who had been the first printer in Pennsylvania, but had quitted the province on account of a quarrel with George Keith, the governor. He could not give me employment himself, having little to do, and already as many persons as he wanted; but he told me that his son, printer at Philadelphia, had lately lost his principal workman, Aquila Rose, who was dead, and that, if I would go thither, he believed that he would engage me. Philadelphia was a hundred miles farther. I hesitated not to embark in a boat, in order to repair, by the shortest cut of the sea, to Amboy, leaving my trunk and effects to come after me by the usual and more tedious conveyance. In crossing the bay we met with a squall which shattered to pieces our rotten sails, prevented us from entering the Kill, and threw us upon Long Island.

During the squall, a drunken Dutchman, who like myself was a passenger in the boat, fell into the sea.

At the moment he was sinking, I seized him by the foretop, saved him, and drew him on board. immersion sobered him a little, so that he fell asleep. after having taken from his pocket a volume, which he requested me to dry. This volume I found to be my old favourite work. Bunvan's Pilarim's Progress. in Dutch, a beautiful impression on fine paper, with copperplate engravings—a dress better than I had ever seen it wear in its own language. I have since learned that it has been translated into almost all the languages of Europe, and, next to the Bible, I am persuaded it is one of the books that has had the greatest spread. Honest John is the first that I know of who has mixed narrative and dialogue together-a mode of writing very engaging to the reader, who, in the most interesting passages, finds himself admitted as it were into the company, and present at the conversation. De Foe has imitated it with success in his Robinson Crusoe, his Moll Flanders, and other works; as also Richardson in his Pamela, &c.

In approaching the island, we found that we had made a part of the coast where it was not possible to land, on account of the strong breakers produced by the rocky shore. We cast anchor, and veered the cable towards the shore. Some men who stood upon the brink hallooed to us, while we did the same on our part; but the wind was so high and the waves so noisy, that we could neither of us hear each other. There were some canoes upon the bank, and we called out to them, and made signs to prevail on them to come and take us up; but either they did

not understand us, or they deemed our request impracticable, and withdrew. Night came on, and nothing remained for us but to wait quietly the subsiding of the wind; till when, we determined—that is, the pilot and I—to sleep, if possible. For that purpose we went below the hatches along with the Dutchman, who was drenched with water. The sea broke over the boat and reached us in our retreat, so that we were presently as completely drenched as he.

We had very little repose during the whole night; but the wind abating the next day, we succeeded in reaching Amboy before it was dark, after having passed thirty hours without provisions, and with no other drink than a bottle of bad rum, the water upon which we rowed being salt. In the evening I went to bed with a very violent fever. I had somewhere read that cold water drunk plentifully was a remedy in such cases. I followed the prescription, was in a profuse sweat for the greater part of the night, and the fever left me. The next day I crossed the river in a ferry-boat, and continued my journey on foot. I had fifty miles to walk in order to reach Burlington, where I was told I should find passage-boats that would convey me to Philadelphia. It rained hard the whole day, so that I was wet to the skin. Finding myself fatigued about noon, I stopped at a paltry inn, where I passed the rest of the day and the whole night, beginning to regret that I had quitted my home. I made, besides, so wretched a figure. that I was suspected to be some runaway servant. This I discovered by the questions that

were asked me; and I felt that I was every moment in danger of being taken up as such. The next day, however, I continued my journey, and arrived in the evening at an inn eight or ten miles from Burlington, that was kept by one Dr Brown. This man entered into conversation with me while I took some refreshment, and perceiving that I had read a little, he expressed towards me considerable interest and friendship. Our acquaintance continued during the remainder of his life. I believe him to have been what is called an itinerant doctor: for there was no town in England, or indeed in Europe, of which he could not give a particular account. He was neither deficient in understanding nor literature, but he was a sad infidel; and some years after, wickedly undertook to travesty the Bible in burlesque verse, as Cotton has travestied Virgil. He exhibited by this means many facts in a very ludicrous point of view. which would have given umbrage to weak minds had his work been published, which it never was.

I spent the night at his house, and reached Burlington next morning. On my arrival I had the mortification to learn that the ordinary passage-boats had sailed a little before. This was on a Saturday, and there would be no other boat till the Tuesday following. I returned to the house of an old woman in the town who had sold me some gingerbread to eat on my passage, and I asked her advice. She invited me to take up my abode with her till an opportunity offered for me to embark. Fatigued with having travelled so far on foot, I accepted her invitation. When she understood that I was a printer, she would

have persuaded me to stay at Burlington and set up my trade, but she was little aware of the capital that would be necessary for such a purpose. I was treated while at her house with true hospitality. She gave me with the utmost good-will a dinner of beefsteaks, and would accept of nothing in return but a pint of ale.

Here I imagined myself to be fixed till the Tuesday in the ensuing week; but walking out in the evening by the river-side, I saw a boat with a number of persons in it approach. It was going to Philadelphia, and the company took me in. As there was no wind, we could only make way with our oars. About midnight, not perceiving the town, some of the company were of opinion that we must have passed it, and were unwilling to row any farther; the rest not knowing where we were, it was resolved that we should stop. We drew towards the shore, entered a creek, and landed near some old palisades, which served us for firewood, it being a cold night in October. Here we stayed till day, when one of the company found the place in which we were, to be Cooper's Creek, a little above Philadelphia, which, in reality, we perceived the moment we were out of the creek. We arrived on Sunday about eight or nine o'clock in the morning, and landed on Market Street wharf.

I have entered into the particulars of my voyage, and shall in like manner describe my first entrance into this city, that you may be able to compare beginnings so little auspicious with the figure I have since made.

On my arrival at Philadelphia I was in my working dress, my best clothes being to come by sea. I was covered with dirt; my pockets were filled with shirts and stockings. I was unacquainted with a single soul in the place, and knew not where to seek for a lodging. Fatigued with walking, rowing, and having passed the night without sleep, I was extremely hungry, and all my money consisted of a Dutch dollar, and about a shilling in copper, which I gave to the boatmen for my passage. As I had assisted them in rowing, they refused it at first, but I insisted on their taking it. A man is sometimes more generous when he has little than when he has much money, probably because, in the first case, he is desirous of concealing his poverty.

I walked towards the top of the street, looking eagerly on both sides, till I came to Market Street. where I met a child with a loaf of bread. Often had I made my dinner on dry bread. I inquired where he had bought it, and went straight to the baker's shop which he pointed out to me. I asked for some biscuits, expecting to find such as we had at Boston; but they made, it seems, none of that sort at Philadelphia. I then asked for a threepenny loaf. They made no loaves of that price. Finding myself ignorant of the prices, as well as of the different kinds of bread. I desired him to let me have threepenny-worth of bread of some kind or other. gave me three large rolls. I was surprised at receiving so much; I took them, however, and having no room in my pockets, I walked on with a roll under each arm, eating the third. In this manner I went

through Market Street to Fourth Street, and passed the house of Mr Read, the father of my future wife. She was standing at the door, observed me, and thought with reason that I made a very singular and grotesque appearance.

I then turned the corner and went through Chesnut Street, eating my roll all the way; and having made this round, I found myself again on Market Street wharf, near the boat in which I arrived. I stepped into it to take a draught of the river water: and finding myself satisfied with my first roll, I gave the other two to a woman and her child who had come down the river with us in the boat, and was waiting to continue her journey. Thus refreshed, I regained the street, which was now full of welldressed people, all going the same way. I joined them, and was thus led to a large Quakers' meetinghouse near the market-place. I sat down with the rest, and after looking round me for some time, hearing nothing said, and being drowsy from my last night's labour and want of rest, I fell into a sound sleep. In this state I continued till the assembly dispersed, when one of the congregation had the goodness to wake me. This was consequently the first house I entered or in which I slept at Philadelphia.

I began again to walk along the street by the river-side; and looking attentively in the face of every one I met with, I at length perceived a young Quaker whose countenance pleased me. I accosted him, and begged him to inform me where a stranger might find a lodging. We were then near the sign

of the Three Mariners. 'They receive travellers here,' said he; 'but it is not a house that bears a good character; if you will go with me, I will show you a better one.' He conducted me to the Crooked Billet, in Water Street. There I ordered something for dinner, and during my meal, a number of curious questions were put to me, my youth and appearance exciting the suspicion of my being a runaway. After dinner my drowsiness returned, and I threw myself upon a bed without taking off my clothes, and slept till six o'clock in the evening, when I was called to supper. I afterwards went to bed at a very early hour, and did not awake till the next morning.

As soon as I got up, I put myself in as decent a trim as I could, and went to the house of Andrew Bradford, the printer. I found his father in the shop, whom I had seen at New York. Having travelled on horseback, he had arrived at Philadelphia before me. He introduced me to his son, who received me with civility, and gave me some breakfast, but told me he had no occasion at present for a journeyman, having lately procured one. He added, that there was another printer newly settled in the town, of the name of Keimer, who might perhaps employ me; and that, in case of refusal, I should be welcome to lodge at his house, and he would give me a little work now and then till something better should offer.

The old man offered to introduce me to the new printer. When we were at his house—'Neighbour,' said he, 'I bring you a young man in the printing business; perhaps you may have need of his services.'

Keimer asked me some questions, put a composingstick in my hand to see how I could work, and then said that at present he had nothing for me to do, but that he should soon be able to employ me. At the same time, taking old Bradford for an inhabitant of the town well disposed towards him, he communicated his project to him, and the prospect he had of Bradford was careful not to discover that he was the father of the other printer; and from what Keimer had said, that he hoped shortly to be in possession of the greater part of the business of the town, led him by artful questions, and by starting some difficulties, to disclose all his views, what his hopes were founded upon, and how he intended to proceed. I was present and heard it all. I instantly saw that one of the two was a cunning old fox, and the other a perfect novice. Bradford left me with Keimer, who was strangely surprised when I informed him who the old man was.

I found Keimer's printing materials to consist of an old damaged press, and a small font of worn-out English letters, with which he himself was at work upon an elegy on Aquila Rose, whom I have mentioned above—an ingenious young man, and of an excellent character, highly esteemed in the town, secretary to the Assembly, and a very tolerable poet. Keimer also made verses, but they were indifferent ones. He could not be said to write in verse, for his method was to set the lines as they flowed from his muse; and as he worked without copy, had but one set of letter-cases, and the elegy would probably occupy all his types, it was impossible for any one to

assist him. I endeavoured to put his press in order, which he had not yet used, and of which indeed he understood nothing; and having promised to come and work off his elegy as soon as it should be ready, I returned to the house of Bradford, who gave me some trifle to do for the present, for which I had my board and lodging.

In a few days Keimer sent for me to print off his elegy. He had now procured another set of lettercases, and had a pamphlet to reprint, upon which he set me to work.

The two Philadelphia printers appeared destitute of every qualification necessary in their profession. Bradford had not been brought up to it, and was very illiterate. Keimer, though he understood a little of the business, was merely a compositor, and wholly incapable of working at press. He had been one of the French prophets, and knew how to imitate their supernatural agitations. At the time of our first acquaintance, he professed no particular religion, but a little of all upon occasion. He was totally ignorant of the world, and a great knave at heart, as I had afterwards an opportunity of experiencing.

Keimer could not endure that, working with him, I should lodge at Bradford's. He had indeed a house, but it was unfurnished, so that he could not take me in. He procured me a lodging at Mr Read's, his landlord, whom I have already mentioned. My trunk and effects being now arrived, I thought of making, in the eyes of Miss Read, a more respectable appearance than when chance exhibited me to her view eating my roll and wandering in the streets.

From this period I began to contract acquaintance with such young people as were fond of reading, and spent my evenings with them agreeably, while at the same time I gained money by my industry, and, thanks to my frugality, lived contented. I thus forgot Boston as much as possible, and wished every one to be ignorant of the place of my residence, except my friend Collins, to whom I wrote, and who kept my secret.

An incident, however, occurred which sent me home much sooner than I had proposed. brother-in-law, of the name of Robert Holmes. master of a sloop trading from Boston to Delaware. Being at Newcastle, forty miles below Philadelphia, he heard of me, and wrote to inform me of the chagrin which my sudden departure from Boston had occasioned my parents, and of the affection which they still entertained for me-assuring me that, if I would return, everything should be adjusted to my satisfaction; and he was very pressing in his I answered his letter, thanked him for entreaties. his advice, and explained the reasons which had induced me to quit Boston, with such force and clearness that he was convinced I had been less to blame than he had imagined.

Sir William Keith, governor of the province, was at Newcastle at the time. Captain Holmes, being by chance in his company when he received my letter, took occasion to speak of me, and showed it him. The governor read it, and appeared surprised when he learned my age. 'He thought me,' he said, 'a young man of very promising talents, and that of

consequence I ought to be encouraged; and here there were at Philadelphia none but very ignorant printers, and that if I were to set up for myself, he had no doubt of my success: that, for his own part, he would procure me all the public business, and would render me every other service in his power.' My brother-in-law related all this to me afterwards at Boston, but I knew nothing of it at the time: when one day Keimer and I being at work together near the window, we saw the governor and another gentleman. Colonel French of Newcastle, handsomely dressed, cross the street, and make directly for our house. We heard them at the door; and Keimer, believing it to be a visit to himself, went immediately down; but the governor inquired for me, came up-stairs, and, with a condescension and politeness to which I had not at all been accustomed, paid me many compliments, desired to be acquainted with me, obligingly reproached me for not having made myself known to him on my arrival in the town, and wished me to accompany him to a tavern, where he and Colonel French were going to taste some excellent Madeira wine.

I was, I confess, somewhat surprised, and Keimer appeared thunder-struck. I went, however, with the governor and colonel to a tavern at the corner of Third Street, where, while we were drinking the Madeira, he proposed to me to establish a printing-house. He set forth the probabilities of success, and himself and Colonel French assured me that I should have their protection and influence in obtaining the printing of the public papers of both governments;

and as I appeared to doubt whether my father would assist me in this enterprise, Sir William said that he would give me a letter to him in which he would represent the advantages of the scheme in a light which he had no doubt would determine him. It was thus concluded that I should return to Boston by the first vessel with the letter of recommendation from the governor to my father. Meanwhile, the project was to be kept secret, and I continued to work for Keimer as before.

The governor sent every now and then to invite me to dine with him. I considered this as a very great honour; and I was the more sensible of it, as he conversed with me in the most affable, familiar, and friendly manner imaginable.

Towards the end of April 1724, a small vessel was ready to sail for Boston. I took leave of Keimer, upon the pretext of going to see my parents. The governor gave me a long letter, in which he said many flattering things of me to my father; and strongly recommended the project of my settling at Philadelphia as a thing which could not fail to make my fortune.

Going down the bay, we struck on a flat, and sprung a leak. The weather was very tempestuous, and we were obliged to pump without intermission: I took my turn. We arrived, however, safe and sound at Boston, after about a fortnight's passage.

I had been absent seven complete months, and my relations, during that interval, had received no intelligence of me; for my brother-in-law, Holmes, was not yet returned, and had not written about me.

My unexpected appearance surprised the family; but they were all delighted at seeing me again, and, except my brother, welcomed me home. I went to him at the printing-house. I was better dressed than I had ever been while in his service: I had a complete suit of clothes, new and neat, a watch in my pocket, and my purse was furnished with nearly five pounds sterling in money. He gave me no very civil reception; and, having eyed me from head to foot, resumed his work.

The workmen asked me with eagerness where I had been, what sort of a country it was, and how I liked it. I spoke in the highest terms of Philadelphia, the happy life we led there, and expressed my intention of going back again. One of them asking what sort of money we had, I displayed before them a handful of silver, which I drew from my pocket. This was a curiosity to which they were not accustomed, paper being the current money at Boston. I failed not after this to let them see my watch; and at last, my brother continuing sullen and out of humour, I gave them a shilling to drink, and took my leave. This visit stung my brother to the soul; for when, shortly after, my mother spoke to him of a reconciliation, and a desire to see us upon good terms, he told her that I had so insulted him before his men, that he would never forget or forgive it. In this, however, he was mistaken.

The governor's letter appeared to excite in my father some surprise; but he said little. After some days, Captain Holmes being returned, he showed it him, asking him if he knew Keith, and what sort of

a man he was; adding, that, in his opinion, it proved very little discernment to think of setting up a boy in business, who, for three years to come, would not be of an age to be ranked in the class of men. Holmes said everything he could in favour of the scheme; but my father firmly maintained its absurdity, and at last gave a positive refusal. He wrote, however, a civil letter to Sir William, thanking him for the protection he had so obligingly offered me, but refusing to assist me for the present, because he thought me too young to be intrusted with the conduct of so important an enterprise, and which would require so considerable a sum of money.

My old comrade, Collins, who was a clerk in the post-office, charmed with the account I gave of my new residence, expressed a desire of going thither; and, while I waited my father's determination, he set off before me by land for Rhode Island, leaving his books, which formed a handsome collection in mathematics and natural philosophy, to be conveyed with mine to New York, where he proposed to wait for me.

My father, though he could not approve of Sir William's proposal, was yet pleased that I had obtained so advantageous a recommendation as that of a person of his rank, and that my industry and economy had enabled me to equip myself so hand-somely in so short a period. Seeing no appearance of accommodating matters between my brother and me, he consented to my return to Philadelphia, advised me to be civil to everybody, to endeavour to obtain general esteem, and avoid satire and sarcasm.

to which he thought I was too much inclined; adding that, with perseverance and prudent economy, I might by the time I became of age save enough to establish myself in business; and that, if a small sum should then be wanting, he would undertake to supply it.

This was all I could obtain from him, except some triffing presents, in token of friendship from him and my mother. I embarked once more for New York, furnished at this time with their approbation and blessing. The sloop having touched at Newport, in Rhode Island, I paid a visit to my brother John, who had for some years been settled there, and was married. He had always been attached to me, and he received me with great affection. One of his friends, whose name was Vernon, having a debt of about thirty-six pounds due to him in Pennsylvania, begged me to receive it for him, and to keep the money till I should hear from him; accordingly, he gave me an order for that purpose. This affair occasioned me in the sequel much uneasiness.

At Newport we took on board a number of passengers, among whom were two young women, and a grave and sensible Quaker lady with her servants. I had shown an obliging forwardness in rendering the Quaker some trifling services, which led her, probably, to feel an interest in my welfare; for when she saw a familiarity take place, and every day increase, between the two young women and me, she took me aside and said: 'Young man, I am in pain for thee. Thou hast no parent to watch over thy conduct, and thou seemest to be ignorant of the

world, and the snares to which youth is exposed. Rely upon what I tell thee; those are women of bad characters; I perceive it in all their actions. If thou dost not take care, they will lead thee into danger. They are strangers to thee, and I advise thee, by the friendly interest I take in thy preservation, to form no connection with them.' As I appeared at first not to think quite so ill of them as she did, she related many things she had seen and heard which had escaped my attention, but which convinced me that she was in the right. I thanked her for her obliging advice, and promised to follow it.

When we arrived at New York, they informed me where they lodged, and invited me to come and see them. I did not, however, go, and it was well I did not; for the next day the captain, missing a silver spoon and some other things, which had been taken from the cabin, procured a search-warrant, found the stolen goods upon these women, and had them punished. And thus, after having been saved from one rock concealed under water, upon which the vessel struck during our passage, I escaped another of a still more dangerous nature.

At New York I found my friend Collins, who had arrived some time before. We had been intimate from our infancy, and had read the same books together; but he had the advantage of being able to devote more time to reading and study, and had an astonishing disposition for mathematics, in which he left me far behind him. When at Boston, I had been accustomed to pass with him almost all my leisure hours. He was then a sober and industrious lad;

his knowledge had gained him a very general esteem, and he seemed to promise to make an advantageous figure in society. But during my absence, he had unfortunately addicted himself to brandy; and I learned, as well from himself as from the report of others, that every day since his arrival at New York he had been intoxicated, and had acted in a very extravagant manner. He had also played and lost all his money; so that I was obliged to pay his expenses at the inn, and to maintain him during the rest of his journey—a burden that was very inconvenient to me.

The governor of New York, whose name was Bernet, hearing the captain say that a young man who was a passenger in his ship had a great number of books, begged him to bring me to his house. I accordingly went, and should have taken Collins with me had he been sober. The governor treated me with great civility, showed me his library—which was a very considerable one—and we talked for some time upon books and authors. This was the second governor who had honoured me with his attention; and to a poor boy, as I was then, these little adventures did not fail to be pleasing.

We arrived at Philadelphia. On the way, I received Vernon's money, without which we should have been unable to have finished our journey.

Collins wished to get employment as a merchant's clerk; but either his breath or his countenance betrayed his bad habit; for, though he had recommendations, he met with no success, and continued to lodge and eat with me and at my expense.

Knowing that I had Vernon's money, he was continually asking me to lend him some of it, promising to repay me as soon as he should get employment. At last he had drawn so much of this money, that I was extremely alarmed at what might become of me, should he fail to make good the deficiency. His habit of drinking did not at all diminish, and was a frequent source of discord between us; for when he had drunk a little too much, he was very headstrong.

Being one day in a boat together on the Delaware with some other young persons, he refused to take his turn in rowing. 'You shall row for me,' said he, 'till we get home.'

'No,' I replied, 'we will not row for you.'

'You shall,' said he, 'or remain upon the water all night.'

'As you please.'

'Let us row,' said the rest of the company; 'what signifies whether he assists or not?'

But, already angry with him for his conduct in other respects, I persisted in my refusal. He then swore that he would make me row, or would throw me out of the boat; and he made up to me. As soon as he was within my reach, I took him by the collar, gave him a violent thrust, and threw him head-foremost into the river. I knew that he was a good swimmer, and was therefore under no apprehensions for his life. Before he could turn himself, we were able, by a few strokes of our oars, to place ourselves out of his reach; and whenever he touched the boat,

we asked him if he would row, striking his hands at the same time with the oars to make him let go his hold. He was nearly suffocated with rage, but obstinately refused making any promise to row. Perceiving, at length, that his strength began to be exhausted, we took him into the boat, and conveyed him home in the evening completely drenched. The utmost coldness subsisted between us after this At last the captain of a West-India ship, who was commissioned to procure a tutor for the children of a gentleman at Barbadoes, meeting with Collins, offered him the place. He accepted it, and took his leave of me, promising to discharge the debt he owed me with the first money he should receive; but I have heard nothing of him since.

The violation of the trust reposed in me by Vernon was one of the first great errors of my life; and it proves that my father was not mistaken when he supposed me too young to be intrusted with the management of important affairs. But Sir William, upon reading his letter, thought him too prudent. 'There was a difference,' he said, 'between individuals; years of maturity were not always accompanied with discretion, neither was youth in every instance devoid of it. Since your father.' added he, 'will not set you up in business, I will do it myself. Make out a list of what will be wanted from England, and I will send for the articles. You shall repay me when you can. I am determined to have a good printer here, and I am sure you will succeed.' This was said with so much

seeming cordiality, that I suspected not for an instant the sincerity of the offer. I had hitherto kept the project with which Sir William had inspired me, of settling in business, a secret at Philadelphia, and I still continued to do so. Had my reliance on the governor been known, some friend, better acquainted with his character than myself, would doubtless have advised me not to trust him; for I afterwards learned that he was universally known to be liberal of promises, when he had no intention to perform. But having never solicited him, how could I suppose his offers to be deceitful? On the contrary, I believed him to be the best man in the world.

I gave him an inventory of a small printing-office, the expense of which I had calculated at about a hundred pounds sterling. He expressed his approbation; but asked if my presence in England, that I might choose the characters myself, and see that every article was good in its kind, would not be an advantage. 'You will also be able,' said he, 'to form some acquaintance there, and establish a correspondence with stationers and booksellers.' This I acknowledged was desirable. 'That being the case,' added he, 'hold yourself in readiness to go with the Annis.' This was the annual vessel, and the only one at that time which made regular voyages between the ports of London and Philadelphia. But the Annis was not to sail for months. I therefore continued to work with Keimer, unhappy respecting the sum which Collins had drawn from me, and almost in continual agony at the thoughts of Vernon, who fortunately made no demand of his money till several years after.

In the account of my first voyage from Boston to Philadelphia, I omitted, I believe, a trifling circumstance, which will not, perhaps, be out of place here. During a calm which stopped us above Block Island, the crew employed themselves in fishing for cod, of which they caught a great number. I had hitherto adhered to my resolution of not eating anything that had possessed life; and I considered, on this occasion, agreeably to the maxims of my master Tryon, the capture of every fish as a sort of murder, committed without provocation, since these animals had neither done, nor were capable of doing, the smallest injury to any one, that should justify the This mode of reasoning I conceived to be unanswerable. Meanwhile, I had formerly been extremely fond of fish; and when one of these cod was taken out of the frying-pan, I thought its flavour delicious. I hesitated some time between principle and inclination, till at last recollecting that when the cod had been opened some small fish were found in its belly, I said to myself, if you eat one another, I see no reason why we may not eat you. I accordingly dined on the cod with no small degree of pleasure, and have since continued to eat like the rest of mankind, returning only occasionally to my vegetable plan. How convenient does it prove to be a rational animal, that knows how to find or invent a plausible pretext for whatever it has an inclination to do!

I contrived to live upon good terms with Keimer,

who had not the smallest suspicion of my projected establishment. He still retained a portion of his former enthusiasm; and being fond of argument, we frequently disputed together. I was so much in the habit of using my Socratic method, and had so frequently puzzled him by my questions, which appeared at first very distant from the point in debate, yet, nevertheless, led to it by degrees, involving him in difficulties and contradictions from which he was unable to extricate himself, that he became at last ridiculously cautious, and would scarcely answer the most plain and familiar question without previously asking me, 'What would you infer from that?' Hence he formed so high an opinion of my talents for refutation, that he seriously proposed to me to become his colleague in the establishment of a new religious sect. He was to propagate the doctrine by preaching, and I to refute every opponent.

When he explained to me his tenets, I found many absurdities which I refused to admit unless he would agree in turn to adopt some of my opinions. Keimer wore his beard long because Moses had somewhere said, 'Thou shalt not mar the corners of thy beard.' I consented to this, provided he would agree to abstain from animal food. 'I doubt,' said he, 'whether my constitution will be able to support it.' I assured him, on the contrary, that he would find himself the better for it. He was naturally a glutton, and I wished to amuse myself by starving him. He consented to make trial of this regimen if I would bear him company; and in

reality we continued it for three months. A woman in the neighbourhood prepared and brought us our victuals, to whom I gave a list of forty dishes in the composition of which there entered neither flesh nor fish. This fancy was the more agreeable to me as it turned to good account; for the whole expense of our living did not exceed for each eighteenpence a week.

I have since that period observed several Lents with the greatest strictness, and have suddenly returned again to my ordinary diet without experiencing the smallest inconvenience, which has led me to regard as of no importance the advice commonly given of introducing gradually such alterations of regimen.

I continued it cheerfully; but poor Keimer suffered terribly. Tired of the project, he sighed for the flesh-pots of Egypt. At length he ordered a roast pig, and invited me and two of our female acquaintance to dine with him; but the pig being ready a little too soon, he could not resist the temptation, and ate it all up before we arrived.

During the circumstances I have related, I had paid some attentions to Miss Read. I entertained for her the utmost esteem and affection; and I had reason to believe that these sentiments were mutual. But we were both young—scarcely more than eighteen years of age; and as I was on the point of undertaking a long voyage, her mother thought it prudent to prevent matters being carried too far for the present, judging that, if marriage was our object, there would be more propriety in it after my

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return, when, as at least I expected, I should be established in my business. Perhaps also she thought that my expectations were not so well founded as I imagined

My most intimate acquaintance at this time were Charles Osborne, Joseph Watson, and James Ralph; voung men who were all fond of reading. The first two were clerks to Mr Charles Brockdon, one of the principal attorneys in the town, and the other clerk to a merchant. Watson was an upright, pious, and sensible young man; the others were somewhat more loose in their principles of religion, particularly Ralph, whose faith, as well as that of Collins, I had contributed to shake; each of whom made me suffer a very adequate punishment. Osborne was sensible. and sincere and affectionate in his friendships, but too much inclined to the critic in matters of litera-Ralph was ingenuous and shrewd, genteel in his address, and extremely eloquent. remember to have met with a more agreeable speaker. They were both enamoured of the muses, and had already evinced their passion by some small poetical productions.

It was a custom with us to take a charming walk on Sundays in the woods that border the Schuylkill. Here we read together, and afterwards conversed on what we read. Ralph was disposed to give himself up entirely to poetry. He flattered himself that he should arrive at great eminence in the art, and even acquire a fortune. The sublimest poets, he pretended, when they first began to write, committed as many faults as himself. Osborne endeavoured to dissuade

him by assuring him that he had no genius for poetry, and advised him to stick to the trade in which he had been brought up. 'In the road of commerce,' said he, 'you will be sure, by diligence and assiduity, though you have no capital, of so far succeeding as to be employed as a factor; and may thus in time acquire the means of setting up for vourself.' I concurred in these sentiments, but at the same time expressed my approbation of amusing ourselves sometimes with poetry, with a view to improve our style. In consequence of this, it was proposed that at our next meeting each of us should bring a copy of verses of his own composition. Our object in this competition was to benefit each other by our mutual remarks, criticisms, and corrections; and as style and expression were all we had in view. we excluded every idea of invention by agreeing that our task should be a version of the eighteenth psalm, in which is described the descent of the Deitv.

The time of our meeting drew near, when Ralph called upon me and told me that his performance was ready. I informed him that I had been idle, and, not much liking the task, had done nothing. He showed me his piece, and asked me what I thought of it. I expressed myself in terms of warm approbation, because it really appeared to have considerable merit. He then said: 'Osborne will never acknowledge the smallest degree of excellence in any production of mine. Envy alone dictates to him a thousand animadversions. Of you he is not so jealous: I wish, therefore, you would take the

verses and produce them as your own. I will pretend not to have had leisure to write anything. We shall then see in what manner he will speak of them.' I agreed to this little artifice, and immediately transcribed the verses, to prevent all suspicion.

We met. Watson's performance was the first that was read. It had some beauties, but many faults. We next read Osborne's, which was much better. Ralph did it justice, remarking a few imperfections, and applauding such parts as were excellent. He had himself nothing to show. It was now my turn. I made some difficulty; seemed as if I wished to be excused; pretended that I had no time to make corrections, &c. No excuse, however, was admissible. and the piece must be produced. It was read and re-read. Watson and Osborne immediately resigned the palm, and united in applauding it. Ralph alone made a few remarks, and proposed some alterations; but I defended my text. Osborne agreed with me, and told Ralph that he was no more able to criticise than he was able to write.

When Osborne was alone with me, he expressed himself still more strongly in favour of what he considered as my performance. He pretended that he had put some restraint on himself before, apprehensive of my construing his commendations into flattery. 'But who would have supposed,' said he, 'Franklin to be capable of such a composition? What painting, what energy, what fire! He has surpassed the original. In his common conversation he appears not to have a choice of words: he

hesitates, and is at a loss; and yet, how he writes!

At our next meeting, Ralph discovered the trick we had played Osborne, who was rallied without mercy.

By this adventure Ralph was fixed in his resolution of becoming a poet. I left nothing unattempted to divert him from his purpose; but he persevered, till at last the reading of Pope's Dunciad effected his cure: he became, however, a very tolerable prose writer. I shall speak more of him hereafter; but as I shall probably have no further occasion to mention the other two, I ought to observe here that Watson died a few years after in my arms. He was greatly regretted; for he was the best of our society. Osborne went to the islands, where he gained considerable reputation as a barrister, and was getting money; but he died young.

The governor appeared to be fond of my company, and frequently invited me to his house. He always spoke of his intention of settling me in business as a point that was decided. I was to take with me letters of recommendation to a number of his friends; and particularly a letter of credit, in order to obtain the necessary sum for the purchase of my press, types, and paper. He appointed various times for me to come for these letters, which would certainly be ready; and when I came, always put me off to another day.

These successive delays continued till the vessel, whose departure had been several times deferred, was on the point of setting sail, when I again went

to Sir William's house to receive my letters and take leave of him. I saw his secretary, Dr Bard, who told me that the governor was extremely busy writing, but that he would be down at Newcastle before the vessel, and that the letters would be delivered to me there.

Ralph, though he was married and had a child, determined to accompany me in this voyage. His object was supposed to be the establishing a correspondence with some mercantile houses, in order to sell goods by commission; but I afterwards learned that, having reason to be dissatisfied with the parents of his wife, he proposed to himself to leave her on their hands and never return to America again.





# CHAPTER IV.

FIRST VISIT TO ENGLAND, IN 1724.

AVING taken leave of my friends and interchanged promises of fidelity with Miss Read, I quitted Philadelphia. At Newcastle the vessel came to anchor. The governor was arrived, and I went to his lodgings. His secretary received me with great civility, told me, on the part of the governor, that he could not see me then, as he was engaged in affairs of the utmost importance, but that he would send the letters on board, and that he wished me, with all his heart, a good voyage and speedy return. I returned, somewhat astonished, to the ship, but still without entertaining the slightest suspicion.

Mr Hamilton, a celebrated barrister of Philadelphia, had taken a passage to England for himself and his son, and, in conjunction with Mr Denham, a Quaker, and Messrs Oniam and Russel, proprietors of a forge in Maryland, had agreed for the whole cabin, so that Ralph and I were obliged to take up our lodging with the crew. Being unknown to everybody in the ship, we were looked upon as of the common order of people; but Mr Hamilton and his son (it was

James, who was afterwards governor) left us at Newcastle, and returned to Philadelphia, where he was recalled at a very great expense to plead the cause of a vessel that had been seized; and just as we were about to sail, Colonel French came on board and showed me many civilities. The passengers upon this paid me more attention, and I was invited, together with my friend Ralph, to occupy the place in the cabin which the return of the Messrs Hamilton had made vacant—an offer which we very readily accepted.

Having learned that the despatches of the governor had been brought on board by Colonel French, I asked the captain for the letters that were to be intrusted to my care. He told me that they were all put together in the bag, which he could not open at present; but before we reached England, he would give me an opportunity of taking them out. I was satisfied with this answer, and we pursued our voyage.

The company in the cabin were all very sociable, and we were perfectly well off as to provisions, as we had the advantage of the whole of Mr Hamilton's, who had laid in a very plentiful stock. During the passage, Mr Denham contracted a friendship for me, which ended only with his life: in other respects, the voyage was by no means an agreeable one, as we had much bad weather.

When we arrived in the Thames, which was in the month of December 1724, the captain was as good as his word, and allowed me to search in the bag for the governor's letters. I could not find a single one with

my name written on it as committed to my care; but I selected six or seven which I judged from the direction to be those that were intended for me, particularly one to Mr Basket, the king's printer, and another to a stationer, who was the first person I called upon. I delivered him the letter as coming from Governor Keith. 'I have no acquaintance,' said he, 'with any such person;' and opening the letter, 'Oh, it is from Riddlesden!' he exclaimed. 'I have lately discovered him to be a very arrant knave, and wish to have nothing to do either with him or his letters.' He instantly put the letter into my hand, turned upon his heel, and left me to serve some customers.

I was astonished at finding these letters were not from the governor. Reflecting, and putting circumstances together, I then began to doubt his sincerity. I rejoined my friend Denham and related the whole affair to him. He let me at once into Keith's character; told me there was not the least probability of his having written a single letter—that no one who knew him ever placed any reliance on him-and laughed at my credulity in supposing that the governor would give me a letter of credit, when he had no credit for himself. As I showed some uneasiness respecting what step I should take, he advised me to try to get employment in the house of some printer. 'You may there,' said he, 'improve yourself in business, and you will be able to settle yourself the more advantageously when you return to America.'

We knew already, as well as the stationer, attorney

Riddlesden to be a knave. He had nearly ruined the father of Miss Read by drawing him in to be his security. We learned from his letter that he was secretly carrying on an intrigué, in concert with the governor, to the prejudice of Mr Hamilton, who, it was supposed, would by this time be in Europe. Denham, who was Hamilton's friend, was of opinion that he ought to be made acquainted with it; and in reality the instant he arrived in England, which was very soon after, I waited on him, and as much from good-will to him as from resentment against the governor, put the letter into his hands. He thanked me very sincerely, the information it contained being of consequence to him; and from that moment bestowed on me his friendship, which afterwards proved on many occasions serviceable to me.

But what are we to think of a governor who could play so scurvy a trick, and thus grossly deceive a poor young lad, wholly destitute of experience? It was a practice with him. Wishing to please everybody, and having little to bestow, he was lavish of promises. He was in other respects sensible and judicious, a very tolerable writer, and a good governor for the people, though not so for the proprietaries, whose instructions he frequently disregarded. Many of our best laws were his work, and established during his administration.

Ralph and I were inseparable companions. We took a lodging together at three and sixpence a week, which was as much as we could afford. He met with some relations in London, but they were poor and not able to assist him. He now, for the first

time, informed me of his intention to remain in England, and that he had no thoughts of ever returning to Philadelphia. He was totally without money—the little he had been able to raise having barely sufficed for his passage. I had still fifteen pistoles remaining; and to me he had from time to time recourse, while he tried to get employment.

At first, believing himself possessed of talents for the stage, he thought of turning actor; but Wilkes, to whom he applied, frankly advised him to renounce the idea, as it was impossible he should succeed. He next proposed to Roberts, a bookseller in Paternoster Row, to write a weekly paper in the manner of the Spectator, upon terms to which Roberts would not listen. Lastly, he endeavoured to procure employment as a copyist, and applied to the lawyers and stationers about the Temple; but he could find no vacancy.

As to myself, I immediately got engaged at Palmer's, at that time a noted printer in Bartholomew Close, with whom I continued nearly a year. 'I applied very assiduously to my work; but I expended with Ralph almost all that I earned. Plays, and other places of amusement which we frequented together, having exhausted my pistoles, we lived after this from hand to mouth. He appeared to have entirely forgotten his wife and child, as I also by degrees forgot my engagements with Miss Read, to whom I never wrote more than one letter, and that merely to inform her that I was not likely to return soon. This was another grand error of my

life, which I should be desirous of correcting were I to begin my career again.

I was employed at Palmer's on the second edition of Wollaston's Religion of Nature. Some of his arguments appearing to me not to be well founded, I wrote a small metaphysical treatise, in which I animadverted on those passages. It was entitled a Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain. I dedicated it to my friend Ralph, and printed a small number of copies. Palmer upon this treated me with more consideration, and regarded me as a young man of talents; though he seriously took me to task for the principles of my pamphlet, which he looked upon as abominable. The printing of this work was another error of my life.

While I lodged in Little Britain, I formed an acquaintance with a bookseller of the name of Wilcox, whose shop was next door to me. Circulating libraries were not then in use. He had an immense collection of books of all sorts. We agreed that, for a reasonable retribution, of which I have now forgotten the price, I should have free access to his library, and take what books I pleased, which I was to return when I had read them. I considered this agreement as a very great advantage; and I derived from it as much benefit as was in my power.

My pamphlet falling into the hands of a surgeon of the name of Lyons, author of a book entitled Infallibility of Human Judgment, was the occasion of a considerable intimacy between us. He expressed great esteem for me, came frequently to see me, in order to converse upon metaphysical subjects, and

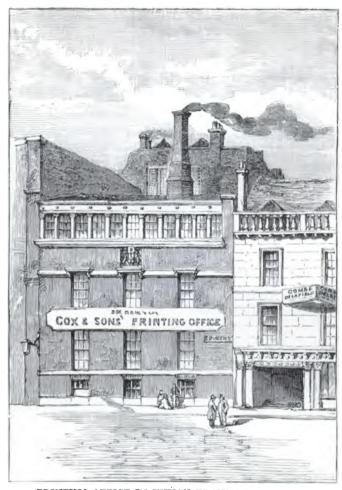
introduced me to Dr Mandeville, author of the Fable of the Bees, who had instituted a club at a tavern in Cheapside, of which he was the soul; he was a facetious and very amusing character. He also introduced me, at Batson's coffee-house, to Dr Pemberton, who promised to give me an opportunity of seeing Sir Isaac Newton, which I very ardently desired; but he never kept his word.

I had brought some curiosities with me from America, the principal of which was a purse made of asbestos, which fire only purifies. Sir Hans Sloane hearing of it, called upon me, and invited me to his house in Bloomsbury Square, where, after showing me everything that was curious, he prevailed on me to add this piece to his collection, for which he paid me very handsomely.

Being without employment, Ralph resolved to quit London and try a country school. This was a plan in which he thought himself likely to succeed, as he wrote a fine hand, and was versed in arithmetic and accounts. But considering the office as beneath him, and expecting some day to make a better figure in the world, when he should be ashamed of its being known that he had exercised a profession so little honourable, he changed his name, and did me the honour of assuming mine. He wrote to me soon after his departure, informing me that he was settled at a small village in Berkshire.

He continued to write to me frequently, sending me large fragments of an epic poem he was composing, and which he requested me to criticise and correct. I did so, but not without endeavouring to

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PRINTING-OFFICE IN WHICH FRANKLIN WORKED.

prevail on him to renounce this pursuit. Young had just published one of his Satires. I copied and sent him a great part of it, in which the author demonstrates the folly of cultivating the muses, from the hope, by their instrumentality, of rising in the world. It was all to no purpose; paper after paper of his poem continued to arrive every post.

I now began to think of laying by some money. The printing-house of Watts, near Lincoln's Inn Fields, being a still more considerable one than that in which I worked, it was probable I might find it more advantageous to be employed there. I offered myself, and was accepted; and in this house I continued during the remainder of my stay in London.

On my entrance, I worked at first as a pressman, conceiving I had need of bodily exercise, to which I had been accustomed in America, where the printers work alternately as compositors and at the press. drank nothing but water. The other workmen, to the number of about fifty, were great drinkers of beer. I carried occasionally a large form of letters in each hand up and down stairs, while the rest employed both hands to carry one. They were surprised to see, by this and many other examples, that the 'American aquatic,' as they used to call me, was stronger than those who drank porter. The beer-boy had sufficient employment during the whole day in serving that house alone. My fellow-pressman drank every day a pint of beer before breakfast, a pint with bread and cheese for breakfast, one between breakfast and dinner, one at dinner, one again about six o'clock in the afternoon, and another after he had

finished his day's work. This custom appeared to me abominable; but he had need, he said, of all this beer, in order to acquire strength to work.

I endeavoured to convince him that the bodily strength furnished by the beer could only be in proportion to the solid part of the barley dissolved in the water of which the beer was composed—that there was a larger portion of flour in a penny loaf; and that, consequently, if he ate this loaf and drank a pint of water with it, he would derive more strength from it than from a pint of beer. This reasoning, however, did not prevent him from drinking his accustomed quantity of beer, and paying every Saturday night a score of four or five shillings for this beverage—an expense from which I was wholly exempt. Thus do these poor fellows continue all their lives in a state of voluntary wretchedness and poverty.

At the end of a few weeks, Watts having occasion for me above stairs as a compositor, I quitted the press. The compositors demanded of me garnishmoney afresh. This I considered as an imposition, having already paid below. The master was of the same opinion, and desired me not to comply. I thus remained two or three weeks out of the fraternity. I was consequently looked upon as excommunicated; and whenever I was absent, no little trick that malice could suggest was left unpractised upon me. I found my letters mixed, my pages transposed, my matter broken, &c., all which was attributed to the spirit that haunted the chapel (as an organised body of printers in an office is called), and tormented

those that were not regularly admitted. I was at last obliged to submit to pay, notwithstanding the protection of the master; convinced of the folly of not keeping up a good understanding with those among whom we are destined to live.

After this I lived in the utmost harmony with my fellow-labourers, and soon acquired considerable influence among them. I proposed some alterations in the laws of the chapel, which I carried without My example prevailed with several of opposition. them to renounce their abominable practice of bread and cheese with beer; and they procured, like me, from a neighbouring house a good basin of warm gruel, in which was a small slice of butter, with toasted bread and nutmeg. This was a much better breakfast, which did not cost more than a pint of beer, namely, three-halfpence, and at the same time preserved the head clearer. Those who continued to gorge themselves with beer, often lost their credit with the publican, from neglecting to pay their score. They had then recourse to me to become security for them; 'their light,' as they used to call it, 'being out,' I attended at the pay-table every Saturday evening to take up the little sum which I had made myself answerable for, and which sometimes amounted to nearly thirty shillings a week.

This circumstance, added to my reputation of being a tolerably good 'gabber,' or, in other words, skilful in the art of burlesque, kept up my importance in the chapel. I had besides recommended myself to the esteem of my master by my assiduous application to business, never observing Saint Monday. My

extraordinary quickness in composing always procured me such work as was most urgent, and which is commonly best paid; and thus my time passed away in a very pleasant manner.

My lodging in Little Britain being too far from the printing-house, I took another in Duke Street, opposite the Roman Catholic Chapel. It was at the back of an Italian warehouse. The house was kept by a widow, who had a daughter, a servant, and a shopboy; but the latter slept out of the house. After sending to the people with whom I lodged in Little Britain to inquire into my character, she agreed to take me in at the same price, three-and-sixpence a week; contenting herself, she said, with so little because of the security she should derive, as they were all women, from having a man lodger in the house.

She was a woman rather advanced in life, the daughter of a clergyman. She had been educated a Protestant; but her husband, whose memory she highly revered, had converted her to the Catholic religion. She had lived in habits of intimacy with persons of distinction, of whom she knew various anecdotes as far back as the time of Charles II. Being subject to fits of the gout, which often confined her to her room, she was sometimes disposed to see company. Hers was so amusing to me, that I was glad to pass the evening with her as often as she desired it. Our supper consisted only of half an anchovy a piece upon a slice of bread and butter, with half a pint of ale between us. But the entertainment was in her conversation.

The early hours I kept and the little trouble I occasioned in the family, made her loath to part with me; and when I mentioned another lodging I had found, nearer the printing-house, at two shillings a week, which fell in with my plan of saving, she persuaded me to give it up, making herself an abatement of two shillings; and thus I continued to lodge with her, during the remainder of my abode in London, at eighteenpence a week.

In a garret of the house there lived, in a most retired manner, a lady seventy years of age, of whom I received the following account from my landlady: In her early years she She was a Roman Catholic. had been sent to the Continent, and entered a convent with the design of becoming a nun; but the climate not agreeing with her constitution, she was obliged to return to England, where, as there were no monasteries, she made a vow to lead a monastic life in as rigid a manner as circumstances would permit. accordingly disposed of all her property to be applied to charitable uses, reserving to herself only twelve pounds a year; and of this small pittance she gave a part to the poor, living on water-gruel, and never making use of fire but to boil it. She had lived in this garret a great many years without paying rent to the successive Catholic inhabitants that had kept the house, who indeed considered her abode with them as a blessing. A priest came every day to confess her. 'I have asked her,' said my landlady, 'how, living as she did, she could find so much employment for a confessor?' To which she answered, 'that it was impossible to avoid vain thoughts.'

I was once permitted to visit her. She was cheerful and polite, and her conversation agreeable. Her apartment was neat; but the whole furniture consisted of a mattress, a table, on which were a crucifix and a book, and a chair which she gave me to sit on, and over the mantel-piece a picture of St Veronica displaying her handkerchief, on which was seen the miraculous impression of the face of Christ, which she explained to me with great gravity. Her countenance was pale, but she had never experienced sickness; and I may adduce her as another proof how little is sufficient to maintain life and health.

At the printing-house I contracted an intimacy with a sensible young man of the name of Wygate, who, as his parents were in good circumstances, had received a better education than is common among printers. He was a tolerable Latin scholar, spoke French fluently, and was fond of reading. I taught him, as well as a friend of his, to swim by taking them twice only into the river, after which they stood in need of no further assistance. We one day made a party to go by water to Chelsea, in order to see the Hospital and Don Soltero's curiosities. our return, at the request of the company, whose curiosity Wygate had excited, I undressed myself and leaped into the river. I swam from near Chelsea the whole way to Blackfriars Bridge, exhibiting during my course a variety of feats of activity and address, both upon the surface of the water as well as under it. This sight occasioned much astonishment and pleasure to those to whom it was new. my youth I took great delight in this exercise.

knew, and could execute, all the evolutions and positions of Thevenot; and I added to them some of my own invention, in which I endeavoured to unite gracefulness and utility. I took a pleasure in displaying them all on this occasion, and was highly flattered with the admiration they excited.

Wygate, besides his being desirous of perfecting himself in this art, was the more attached to me from there being in other respects a conformity in our tastes and studies. He at length proposed to me to make the tour of Europe with him, maintaining ourselves at the same time by working at our profession. I was on the point of consenting, when I mentioned it to my friend, Mr Denham, with whom I was glad to pass an hour whenever I had leisure. He dissuaded me from the project, and advised me to think of returning to Philadelphia, which he was about to do himself. I must relate in this place a trait of this worthy man's character.

He had formerly been in business at Bristol, but failing, he compounded with his creditors, and departed for America, where, by assiduous application as a merchant, he acquired in a few years a very considerable fortune. Returning to England in the same vessel with myself, as I have related above, he invited all his old creditors to a feast. When assembled, he thanked them for the readiness with which they had received his small composition; and, while they expected nothing more than a simple entertainment, each found under his plate, when it came to be removed, a draft upon a banker for the residue of his debt with interest.

He told me that it was his intention to carry back with him to Philadelphia a great quantity of goods, in order to open a store; and he offered to take me with him in the capacity of clerk, to keep his books, in which he would instruct me, copy letters, and superintend the store. He added, that as soon as I had acquired a knowledge of mercantile transactions, he would improve my situation by sending me with a cargo of corn and flour to the American islands, and by procuring me other lucrative commissions; so that, with good management and economy, I might in time begin business with advantage for myself.

I relished these proposals. London began to tire me; the agreeable hours I had passed at Philadelphia presented themselves to my mind, and I wished to see them revive. I consequently engaged myself to Mr Denham at a salary of fifty pounds a year. This was indeed less than I earned as a compositor, but then I had a much fairer prospect. I took leave, therefore, as I believed for ever, of printing, and gave myself up to my new occupation, spending all my time either in going from house to house with Mr Denham to purchase goods, or in packing them up, or in expediting the workmen, &c. When everything, however, was on board, I had at last a few days' leisure.

During this interval, I was one day sent for by a gentleman whom I knew only by name. It was Sir William Wyndham. I went to his house. He had by some means heard of my performances between Chelsea and Blackfriars, and that I had taught the art of swimming to Wygate and another

young man in the course of a few hours. sons were on the point of setting out on their travels: he was desirous that they should previously learn to swim, and offered me a very liberal reward if I would undertake to instruct them. They were not vet arrived in town, and the stay I should make was uncertain; I could not, therefore, accept his proposal. I was led, however, to suppose from this incident, that if I had wished to remain in London and open a swimming school, I should perhaps have gained a great deal of money. This idea struck me so forcibly, that, had the offer been made sooner, I should have dismissed the thought of returning as vet to America. Some years after, you and I had a more important business to settle with one of the sons of Sir William Wyndham, then Lord Egremont. But let us not anticipate events.

I thus passed about eighteen months in London, working almost without intermission at my trade, avoiding all expense on my own account, except going now and then to the play, and purchasing a few books. But my friend Ralph kept me poor. He owed me about twenty-seven pounds, which was so much money lost; and when considered as taken from my little savings, was a very great sum. had, notwithstanding this, a regard for him, as he possessed many amiable qualities. But though I had done nothing for myself in point of fortune. I had increased my stock of knowledge, either by the many excellent books I had read, or the conversation of learned and literary persons with whom I was acquainted.



### CHAPTER V.

### SETTLES IN PHILADELPHIA.

E sailed from Gravesend on the 23d of July 1726. [The voyage was exceedingly tedious, the vessel having in the first place

been detained a considerable time at Cowes, in the Isle of Wight, by contrary winds, and at which place Franklin and some other passengers spent some time on shore.] We landed at Philadelphia on the 11th of the following October. Keith had been deprived of his office of governor, and was succeeded by Major Gordon. I met him walking in the streets as a private individual. He appeared a little ashamed at seeing me, but passed on without saying anything.

I should have been equally ashamed myself at meeting Miss Read, had not her family, justly despairing of my return after reading my letter, advised her to give me up and marry a potter of the name of Rogers, to which she consented; but he never made her happy, and she soon separated from him. His skill in his profession had seduced Miss Read's parents; but he was as bad a subject as he was excellent as a workman. He involved himself

in debt, and fled, in the year 1727 or 1728, to the West Indies, where he died.

During my absence, Keimer had taken a more considerable house, in which he kept a shop, that was well supplied with paper and various other articles. He had procured some new types and a number of workmen—among whom, however, there was not one who was good for anything—and he appeared not to want business.

Mr Denham took a warehouse in Water Street, where we exhibited our commodities. I applied myself closely, studied accounts, and became in a short time very expert in trade. We lodged and ate together. He was sincerely attached to me, and acted towards me as if he had been my father. On my side, I respected and loved him. My situation was happy, but it was a happiness of no long duration.

Early in February 1727, when I entered into my twenty-second year, we were both taken ill. I was attacked with a pleurisy, which had nearly carried me off; I suffered terribly, and considered it as all over with me. I felt indeed a sort of disappointment when I found myself likely to recover, and regretted that I had still to experience, sooner or later, the same disagreeable scene again.

I have forgotten what was Mr Denham's disorder, but it was a tedious one, and he at last sank under it. He left me a small legacy in his will, as a testimony of his friendship; and I was once more abandoned to myself in the wide world, the warehouse being confided to the care of the testamentary executor, who dismissed me.

My brother-in-law Holmes, who happened to be at Philadelphia, advised me to return to my former profession; and Keimer offered me a very considerable salary if I would undertake the management of his printing-office, that he might devote himself entirely to the superintendence of his shop. His wife and relations in London had given me a bad character of him; and I was loath for the present to have any concern with him. I endeavoured to get employment as a clerk to a merchant; but not readily finding a situation, I was induced to accept Keimer's proposal.

The following were the persons I found in his printing-house:

Hugh Meredith, a Pennsylvanian, about thirty years of age. He had been brought up to husbandry, was honest, sensible, had some experience, and was fond of reading, but too much addicted to drinking.

Stephen Potts, a young rustic just broke from school, and of rustic education, with endowments rather above the common order, and a competent portion of understanding and gaiety, but a little idle. Keimer had engaged these two at very low wages, which he had promised to raise every three months a shilling a week, provided their improvement in the typographic art should merit it. This future increase of wages was the bait he had made use of to insnare them. Meredith was to work at the press, and Potts to bind books, which he had engaged to teach them, though he understood neither himself.

John Savage, an Irishman, who had been brought up to no trade, and whose service, for a period of four years, Keimer had purchased of the captain of a ship. He was also to be a pressman.

George Webb, an Oxford scholar, whose time he had in like manner bought for four years, intending him for a compositor. I shall speak more of him presently.

Lastly, David Harry, a country lad, who was apprenticed to him.

I soon perceived that Keimer's intention, in engaging me at a price so much above what he was accustomed to give, was that I might form all these raw journeymen and apprentices, who scarcely cost him anything, and who, being indentured, would, as soon as they should be sufficiently instructed, enable him to do without me. I nevertheless adhered to my agreement. I put the office in order—which was in the utmost confusion—and brought his people by degrees to pay attention to their work, and to execute it in a more masterly style.

It was singular to see an Oxford scholar in the condition of a purchased servant. He was not more than eighteen years of age; and the following are the particulars he gave me of himself. Born at Gloucester, he had been educated at a grammar-school, and had distinguished himself among the scholars by his superior style of acting when they represented dramatic performances. He was member of a literary club in the town; and some pieces of his composition, in prose as well as in verse, had been inserted in the Gloucester papers. From hence

he was sent to Oxford, where he remained about a year; but he was not contented, and wished above all things to see London and become an actor. At length, having received fifteen guineas to pay his quarter's board, he decamped with the money from Oxford, hid his gown in a hedge, and travelled to There, having no friend to direct him, he London. fell into bad company, soon squandered his fifteen guineas, could find no way of being introduced to the actors, became contemptible, pawned his clothes, and was in want of bread. As he was walking along the streets, almost famished with hunger, and not knowing what to do, a recruiting bill was put into his hand, which offered an immediate treat and bountymoney to whoever was disposed to serve in America. He instantly repaired to the house of rendezvous. enlisted himself, was put on board a ship, and conveyed to America, without ever writing a line to inform his parents what was become of him. His mental vivacity and good natural disposition made him an excellent companion; but he was indolent, thoughtless, and to the last degree imprudent.

John, the Irishman, soon ran away. I began to live very agreeably with the rest. They respected me, and the more so as they found Keimer incapable of instructing them, and as they learned something from me every day. We never worked on a Saturday, it being Keimer's Sabbath, so that I had two days a week for reading.

I increased my acquaintance with persons of knowledge and information in the town. Keimer himself treated me with great civility and apparent esteem; and I had nothing to give me uneasiness but my debt to Vernon, which I was unable to pay, my savings as yet being very little. He had the goodness, however, not to ask me for the money.

Our press was frequently in want of the necessary quantity of letter, and there was no such trade as that of letter-founder in America. I had seen the practice of this art at the house of James, in London, but had at the time paid it very little attention. I, however, contrived to fabricate a mould. I made use of such letters as we had for punches, founded new letters of lead in matrices of clay, and thus supplied in a tolerable manner the wants that were most pressing.

I also upon occasion engraved various ornaments, made ink, gave an eye to the shop; in short, I was in every respect the factotum. But useful as I made myself, I perceived that my services became every day of less importance, in proportion as the other men improved; and when Keimer paid me my second quarter's wages, he gave me to understand that they were too heavy, and that he thought I ought to make an abatement. He became by degrees less civil, and assumed more the tone of master. He frequently found fault, was difficult to please, and seemed always on the point of coming to an open quarrel with me.

I continued, however, to bear it patiently, conceiving that his ill-humour was partly occasioned by the derangement and embarrassment of his affairs. At last a slight incident broke our connection. Hearing a noise in the neighbourhood, I put my head out

at the window to see what was the matter. Keimer being in the street, observed me, and in a loud and angry tone told me to mind my work, adding some reproachful words, which piqued me the more as they were uttered in the street; and the neighbours, whom the same noise had attracted to the windows. were witnesses of the manner in which I was He immediately came up to the printingtreated. room and continued to exclaim against me. quarrel became warm on both sides, and he gave me notice to quit him at the expiration of three months, as had been agreed upon between us, regretting that he was obliged to give me so long a term. I told him that his regret was superfluous, as I was ready to quit him instantly; and I took my hat and came out of the house, begging Meredith to take care of some things which I left, and bring them to my lodgings.

Meredith came to me in the evening. We talked for some time upon the quarrel that had taken place. He had conceived a great veneration for me, and was sorry I should quit the house while he remained in it. He dissuaded me from returning to my native country, as I began to think of doing. He reminded me that Keimer owed more than he possessed; that his creditors began to be alarmed; that he kept his shop in a wretched state, often selling things at prime cost for the sake of ready-money, and continually giving credit without keeping any accounts; that of consequence he must very soon fail, which would occasion a vacancy from which I might derive advantage. I objected my want of money: upon

which he informed me that his father had a very high opinion of me, and, from a conversation that had passed between them, he was sure that he would advance whatever might be necessary to establish us. if I was willing to enter into partnership with him. 'My time with Keimer,' added he, 'will be at an end next spring. In the meantime we may send to London for our press and types. I know that I am no workman; but if you agree to the proposal, your skill in the business will be balanced by the capital I shall furnish, and we will share the profits equally.' His proposal was reasonable, and I fell in with it. His father, who was then in the town, approved of He knew that I had some ascendency over his son, as I had been able to prevail on him to abstain a long time from drinking brandy; and he hoped that, when more closely connected with him, I should cure him entirely of this unfortunate habit.

I gave the father a list of what it would be necessary to import from London. He took it to a merchant, and the order was given. We agreed to keep the secret till the arrival of the materials, and I was in the meantime to procure work, if possible, in another printing-house; but there was no place vacant, and I remained idle. After some days, Keimer having the expectation of being employed to print some New Jersey money-bills that would require types and engravings which I only could furnish, and fearful that Bradford, by engaging me, might deprive him of this undertaking, sent me a very civil message, telling me that old friends ought not to be disunited on account of a few words, which

were the effect only of a momentary passion, and inviting me to return to him. Meredith persuaded me to comply with the invitation, particularly as it would afford him more opportunities of improving himself in the business by means of my instructions. I did so; and we lived upon better terms than before our separation.

He obtained the New Jersey business; and, in order to execute it, I constructed a copperplate printing-press, the first that had been seen in the country. I engraved various ornaments and vignettes for the bills; and we repaired to Burlington together, where I executed the whole to general satisfaction; and he received a sum of money for this work, which enabled him to keep his head above water for a considerable time longer.

At Burlington I formed an acquaintance with the principal personages of the province, many of whom were commissioned by the Assembly to superintend the press, and to see that no more bills were printed than the law had prescribed. Accordingly, they were constantly with us, each in his turn; and he that came commonly brought with him a friend or two to bear him company. My mind was more cultivated by reading than Keimer's; and it was for this reason probably that they set more value on my conversation. They took me to their houses. introduced me to their friends, and treated me with the greatest civility; while Keimer, though master, saw himself a little neglected. He was, in fact, a strange person, ignorant of the common modes of life, apt to oppose with rudeness generally received

opinions, an enthusiast in certain points of religion, disgustingly unclean in his person, and a little knavish withal.

We remained there nearly three months; and at the expiration of this period I could include in the list of my friends Judge Allen: Samuel Bustil, secretary of the province; Isaac Pearson; Joseph Cooper; several of the Smiths, all members of the Assembly; and Isaac Decon, inspector-general. last was a shrewd and subtle old man. He told me that when a boy, his first employment had been that of carrying clay to brickmakers; that he did not learn to write till he was somewhat advanced in life; that he was afterwards employed as an underling to a surveyor, who taught him his trade; and that by industry he had at last acquired a competent fortune. 'I foresee,' said he to me one day, that you will soon supplant this man (speaking of Keimer), and get a fortune in the business at Philadelphia.' He was totally ignorant at the time of my intention of establishing myself there or anywhere These friends were very serviceable to me in the end, as was I also, upon occasion, to some of them; and they have continued ever since their esteem for me.

Before I relate the particulars of my entrance into business, it may be proper to inform you what was at that time the state of my mind as to moral principles, that you may see the degree of influence they had upon the subsequent events of my life.

My parents had given me betimes religious impressions, and I received from my infancy a pious educa-

tion in the principles of Calvinism. But scarcely was I arrived at fifteen years of age, when, after having doubted in turn of different tenets, according as I found them combated in the different books that I read, I began to doubt of revelation itself. Some volumes against deism fell into my hands. They were said to be the substance of sermons preached at Boyle's Lecture. It happened that they produced on me an effect precisely the reverse of what was intended by the writers; for the arguments of the deists, which were cited in order to be refuted, appeared to me much more forcible than the refutation itself.\* In a word, I soon became a perfect deist. My arguments perverted some other young persons, particularly Collins and Ralph. in the sequel, when I recollected that they had both used me extremely ill, without the smallest remorse; when I considered the behaviour of Keith, another freethinker, and my own conduct towards Vernon and Miss Read, which at times gave me great uneasiness, I was led to suspect that this doctrine, though it might be true, was not very useful. I began to entertain a less favourable opinion of my London pamphlet — to which I had prefixed as a motto the following lines of Dryden:

> Whatever is, is right; but purblind man Sees but part of the chain, the nearest links, His eyes not carrying to that equal beam That poises all above;

\*[This shows the extreme danger of unskilful though zealous men attempting to refute doctrinal errors. Franklin lived to think very differently.]

and of which the object was to prove, from the attributes of God, his goodness, wisdom, and power, that there could be no such thing as evil in the world—that vice and virtue did not in reality exist, and were nothing more than vain distinctions. I no longer regarded it as so blameless a work as I had formerly imagined; and I suspected that some error must have imperceptibly glided into my argument, by which all the inferences I had drawn from it had been affected, as frequently happens in metaphysical reasonings. In a word, I was at last convinced that truth, probity, and sincerity in transactions between man and man were of the utmost importance to the happiness of life; and I resolved from that moment, and wrote the resolution in my journal, to practise them as long as I lived.

Revelation, indeed, as such had no influence on my mind; but I was of opinion that, though certain actions could not be bad merely because revelation had prohibited them, or good because it enjoined them, yet it was probable that those actions were prohibited because they were bad for us, or enjoined because advantageous in their nature, all things considered. This persuasion, Divine Providence, or some guardian angel, and perhaps a concurrence of favourable circumstances co-operating, preserved me from all immorality, or gross and voluntary injustice. to which my want of religion was calculated to expose me in the dangerous period of youth, and in the hazardous situations in which I sometimes found myself, among strangers, and at a distance from the eye and admonitions of my father.

may say voluntary, because the errors into which I had fallen had been, in a manner, the forced result either of my own inexperience, or the dishonesty of others. Thus, before I entered on my new career, I had imbibed solid principles and a character of probity. I knew their value; and I made a solemn engagement with myself never to depart from them.

I had not long returned from Burlington before our printing materials arrived from London. I settled my accounts with Keimer, and quitted him, with his own consent, before he had any knowledge of our plan. We found a house to let near the market. We took it; and to render the rent less burdensome (it was then twenty-four pounds a year, but I have since known it let for seventy), we admitted Thomas Godfrey, a glazier, with his family, who eased us of a considerable part of it; and with him we agreed to board.

We had no sooner unpacked our letters and put our press in order, than a person of my acquaint-ance, George House, brought us a countryman whom he had met in the streets inquiring for a printer. Our money was almost exhausted by the number of things we had been obliged to procure. The five shillings we received from this countryman, the first-fruit of our earnings, coming so seasonably, gave me more pleasure than any sum I have since gained; and the recollection of the gratitude I felt on this occasion to George House has rendered me often more disposed than perhaps I should otherwise have been to encourage young beginners in trade.

There are in every country morose beings who are There was one of this always prognosticating ruin. stamp at Philadelphia. He was a man of fortune. declined in years, had an air of wisdom, and a very grave manner of speaking. His name was Samuel Mickle. I knew him not; but he stopped one day at my door and asked me if I was the young man who had lately opened a new printing-house. Upon my answering in the affirmative, he said that he was very sorry for me, as it was an expensive undertaking, and the money that had been laid out upon it would be lost, Philadelphia being a place falling into decay—its inhabitants having all, or nearly all, of them, been obliged to call together their creditors. That he knew from undoubted fact the circumstances which might lead us to suppose the contrary -such as new buildings and the advanced price of rent—to be deceitful appearances, which in reality contributed to hasten the general ruin; and he gave me so long a detail of misfortunes, actually existing, or which were soon to take place, that he left me almost in a state of despair. Had I known this man before I entered into trade, I should doubtless never have ventured. He continued, however. to live in this place of decay, and to declaim in the same style, refusing for many years to buy a house because all was going to wreck; and in the end I had the satisfaction to see him pay five times · as much for one as it would have cost him had he purchased it when he first began his lamentations.



## CHAPTER VI.

#### INDUSTRY AND SUCCESS.

OUGHT to have related that, during the

autumn of the preceding year, I had united the majority of well-informed persons of my acquaintance into a club, which we called by the name of the 'Junto,' and the object of which was to improve our understandings. We met every Friday The regulations I drew up obliged every member to propose in his turn one or more questions upon some point of morality, politics, or philosophy, which were to be discussed by the society; and to read, once in three months, an essay of his own composition on whatever subject he pleased. Our debates were under the direction of a president, and were to be dictated only by a sincere desire of truth -the pleasure of disputing and the vanity of triumph having no share in the business; and in order to prevent undue warmth, every expression which implied obstinate adherence to an opinion, and

The first members of our club were Joseph Breintnal, whose occupation was that of a scrivener.

all direct contradiction, were prohibited, under small

pecuniary penalties.

He was a middle-aged man, of a good natural disposition, strongly attached to his friends, a great lover of poetry, reading everything that came in his way, and writing tolerably well, ingenious in many little trifles, and of an agreeable conversation.

Thomas Godfrey, a skilful, though self-taught mathematician, and who was afterwards the inventor of what now goes by the name of Hadley's dial; but he had little knowledge out of his own line, and was insupportable in company, always requiring, like the majority of mathematicians that have fallen in my way, an unusual precision in everything that is said, continually contradicting, or making trifling distinctions—a sure way of defeating all the ends of conversation. He very soon left us.

Nicolas Scull, a surveyor, and who became afterwards surveyor-general. He was fond of books, and wrote verses.

William Parsons, brought up to the trade of a shoemaker, but who, having a taste for reading, had acquired a profound knowledge of mathematics. He first studied them with a view to astrology, and was afterwards the first to laugh at his folly. He also became surveyor-general.

William Maugridge, a joiner, and very excellent mechanic; and in other respects a man of solid understanding.

Hugh Meredith, Stephen Potts, and George Webb, of whom I have already spoken.

Robert Grace, a young man of fortune—generous, animated, and witty; fond of epigrams, but more fond of his friends.

And lastly, William Coleman, at that time a merchant's clerk, and nearly of my own age. He had a cooler and clearer head, a better heart, and more scrupulous morals, than almost any other person I have ever met with. He became a very respectable merchant, and one of our provincial judges. Our friendship subsisted without interruption for more than forty years, till the period of his death; and the club continued to exist almost as long.

This was the best school for politics and philosophy that then existed in the province; for our questions, which were read once a week previous to their discussion, induced us to peruse attentively such books as were written upon the subjects proposed, that we might be able to speak upon them more pertinently. We thus acquired the habit of conversing more agreeably, every object being discussed conformably to our regulations, and in a manner to prevent mutual disgust. To this circumstance may be attributed the long duration of the club, which I shall have frequent occasion to mention as I proceed.

I have introduced it here as being one of the means on which I had to count for success in my business, every member exerting himself to procure work for us. Breintnal, among others, obtained for us, on the part of the Quakers, the printing of forty sheets of their History, of which the rest was to be done by Keimer. Our execution of this work was by no means masterly, as the price was very low. It was in folio, upon pro patria paper, and in the pica letter, with heavy notes in the smallest type. I composed a sheet a day, and Meredith put it to press.

It was frequently eleven o'clock at night, sometimes later, before I had finished my distribution for the next day's task; for the little things which our friends occasionally sent us kept us back with this work; but I was so determined to compose a sheet a day, that one evening, when my form was imposed, and my day's work, as I thought, at an end, an accident having broken this form and deranged two complete folio pages, I immediately distributed and composed them anew before I went to bed.

This unwearied industry, which was perceived by our neighbours, began to acquire us reputation and credit. I learned, among other things, that our new printing-house being the subject of conversation at a club of merchants who met every evening, it was the general opinion that it would fail, there being already two printing-houses in the town, Keimer's and Bradford's. But Dr Bard, whom you and I had occasion to see, many years after, at his native town of St Andrews, in Scotland, was of a different opinion. 'The industry of this Franklin,' says he, 'is superior to anything of the kind I have ever witnessed. I see him still at work when I return from the club at night, and he is at it again in the morning before his neighbours are out of bed.' This account struck the rest of the assembly, and shortly after one of its members came to our house and offered to supply us with articles of stationery; but we wished not as vet to embarrass ourselves with keeping a shop. It is not for the sake of applause that I enter so freely into the particulars of my industry, but that such of my descendants as shall

read these memoirs may know the use of this virtue, by seeing in the recital of my life the effects it operated in my favour.

George Webb having found a friend who lent him the necessary sum to buy out his time of Keimer, came one day to offer himself to us as journeyman. We could not employ him immediately; but I foolishly told him, under the rose, that I intended shortly to publish a new periodical paper, and that we should then have work for him. My hopes of success, which I imparted to him, were founded on the circumstance that the only paper we had in Philadelphia at that time, and which Bradford printed, was a paltry thing, miserably conducted, in no respect amusing, and which yet was profitable. consequently supposed that a good work of this kind could not fail of success. Webb betrayed my secret to Keimer, who, to prevent me, immediately published the prospectus of a paper that he intended to institute himself, and in which Webb was to be engaged. I was exasperated at this proceeding, and, with a view to counteract them, not being able at present to institute my own paper, I wrote some humorous pieces in Bradford's under the title of the Busybody, and which was continued for several months by Breintnal. I hereby fixed the attention of the public upon Bradford's paper; and the prospectus of Keimer, which we turned into ridicule, was treated with contempt. He began, notwithstanding, his paper; and after continuing it for nine months, having at most not more than ninety subscribers, he offered it me for a mere trifle. I had for some time been ready for such an engagement; I therefore instantly took it upon myself, and in a few years it proved extremely profitable to me.

I perceive that I am apt to speak in the first person, though our partnership still continued. It is perhaps because, in fact, the whole business devolved upon me. Meredith was no compositor, and but an indifferent pressman; and it was rarely that he abstained from hard drinking. My friends were sorry to see me connected with him; but I contrived to derive from it the utmost advantage the case admitted.

Our first number produced no other effect than any other paper which had appeared in the province, as to type and printing; but some remarks, in my peculiar style of writing, upon the dispute which then prevailed between Governor Burnet and the Massachusetts Assembly, struck some persons as above mediocrity, caused the paper and its editors to be talked of, and in a few weeks induced them to Many others followed their become our subscribers. example; and our subscription continued to increase. This was one of the first good effects of the pains I had taken to learn to put my ideas on paper. I derived this further advantage from it, that the leading men of the place, seeing in the author of this publication a man so well able to use his pen, thought it right to patronise and encourage me.

The votes, laws, and other public pieces were printed by Bradford. An address of the House of Assembly to the Governor had been executed by him in a very coarse and incorrect manner. We

reprinted it with accuracy and neatness, and sent a copy to every member. They perceived the difference; and it so strengthened the influence of our friends in the Assembly, that we were nominated its printer for the following year.

Among these friends I ought not to forget one member in particular, Mr Hamilton, whom I have mentioned in a former part of my narrative, and who was now returned from England. He warmly interested himself for me on this occasion, as he did likewise on many others afterwards, having continued his kindness to me till his death.

About this period, Mr Vernon reminded me of the debt I owed him, but without pressing me for payment. I wrote a handsome letter on the occasion, begging him to wait a little longer, to which he consented; and as soon as I was able, I paid him principal and interest, with many expressions of gratitude, so that this error of my life was in a manner atoned for.

But another trouble now happened to me, which I had not the smallest reason to expect. Meredith's father, who, according to our agreement, was to defray the whole expense of our printing materials, had only paid a hundred pounds. Another hundred was still due, and the merchant being tired of waiting, commenced a suit against us. We bailed the action, but with the melancholy prospect, that if the money was not forthcoming at the time fixed, the affair would come to issue, judgment be put in execution, our delightful hopes be annihilated, and ourselves entirely ruined, as the types and press

must be sold, perhaps at half their value, to pay the debt.

In this distress, two real friends, whose generous conduct I have never forgotten, and never shall forget while I retain the remembrance of anything, came to me separately, without the knowledge of each other, and without my having applied to either Each offered whatever money might be of them. necessary to take the business into my own hands, if the thing was practicable, as they did not like that I should continue in partnership with Meredith, who, they said, was frequently seen drunk in the streets, and gambling at alchouses, which very much injured our credit. These friends were William I told them, that Coleman and Robert Grace. while there remained any probability that the Merediths would fulfil their part of the compact, I could not propose a separation, as I conceived myself to be under obligations to them for what they had done already, and were still disposed to do, if they had the power; but, in the end, should they fail in their engagement, and our partnership be dissolved, I should then think myself at liberty to accept the kindness of my friends.

Things remained for some time in this state. At last, I said one day to my partner: 'Your father is perhaps dissatisfied with your having a share only in the business, and is unwilling to do for two what he would do for you alone. Tell me frankly if that be the case, and I will resign the whole to you, and do for myself as well as I can.'

'No,' said he; 'my father has really been dis-

appointed in his hopes; he is not able to pay, and I wish to put him to no further inconvenience. I see that I am not at all calculated for a printer. I was educated as a farmer, and it was absurd in me to come here, at thirty years of age, and bind myself apprentice to a new trade. Many of my countrymen are going to settle in North Carolina, where the soil is exceedingly favourable. tempted to go with them, and to resume my former occupation. You will doubtless find friends who will assist you. If you will take upon yourself the debts of the partnership, return my father the hundred pounds he has advanced, pay my little personal debts, and give thirty pounds and a new saddle, I will renounce the partnership, and consign over the whole stock to you.'

I accepted this proposal without hesitation. It was committed to paper, and signed and sealed without delay. I gave him what he demanded; and he departed soon after for Carolina, from whence he sent me, in the following year, two long letters, containing the best accounts that had yet been given of that country, as to climate, soil, agriculture, &c., for he was well versed in these matters. I published them in my newspaper, and they were received with great satisfaction.

As soon as he was gone, I applied to my two friends, and not wishing to give a disobliging preference to either of them, I accepted from each half what he had offered me, and which it was necessary I should have. I paid the partnership debts, and continued the business on my own account, taking

care to inform the public by advertisement of the partnership being dissolved. This was, I think, in the year 1729 or thereabouts.

Nearly at the same period, the people demanded a new emission of paper-money, the existing and only one that had taken place in the province, and which amounted to £15,000, being soon to expire. The wealthy inhabitants, prejudiced against every sort of paper currency, from the fear of its depreciationof which there had been an instance in the province of New England, to the injury of its holdersstrongly opposed this measure. We had discussed this affair in our Junto, in which I was on the side of the new emission, convinced that the first small sum, fabricated in 1723, had done much good in the province, by favouring commerce, industry, and population, since all the houses were now inhabited, and many others building; whereas I remembered to have seen, when I first paraded the streets of Philadelphia, eating my roll, the majority of those in Walnut Street, Second Street, Fourth Street, as well as a great number in Chesnut and other streets. with papers on them signifying that they were to be let, which made me think at the time that the inhabitants of the town were deserting it one after another.

Our debates made me so fully master of the subject, that I wrote and published an anonymous pamphlet, entitled An Inquiry into the Nature and Necessity of Paper Currency. It was very well received by the lower and middling classes of people; but it displeased the opulent, as it increased

the clamour in favour of the new emission. Having, however, no writer among them capable of answering it, their opposition became less violent; and there being in the House of Assembly a majority for the measure, it passed. The friends I had acquired in the House, persuaded that I had done the country essential service on this occasion, rewarded me by giving me the printing of the bills. It was a lucrative employment, and proved a very seasonable help to me; another advantage which I derived from having habituated myself to write.

Time and experience so fully demonstrated the utility of paper currency, that it never after experienced any considerable opposition; so that it soon amounted to £55,000, and in the year 1739 to £80,000. It has since risen, during the last war, to £350,000—trade, buildings, and population having in the interval continually increased; but I am now convinced that there are limits beyond which paper money would be prejudicial.

I soon after obtained, by the influence of my friend Hamilton, the printing of the Newcastle paper money, another profitable work, as I then thought it—little things appearing great to persons of moderate fortune; and they were really great to me, as proving great encouragements. He also procured me the printing of the laws and votes of that great government, which I retained as long as I continued in the business.

I now opened a small stationer's shop. I kept bonds and agreements of all kinds, drawn up in a more accurate form than had yet been seen in that part of the world—a work in which I was assisted by my friend Breintnal. I had also paper, parchment, pasteboard, books, &c. One Whitemash, an excellent compositor, whom I had known in London, came to offer himself; I engaged him, and he continued constantly and diligently to work with me. I also took an apprentice, the son of Aquila Rose.

I began to pay by degrees the debt I had contracted; and in order to insure my credit and character as a tradesman, I took care not only to be really industrious and frugal, but also to avoid every appearance of the contrary. I was plainly dressed, and never seen in any place of public amusement. I never went a-fishing or hunting. A book indeed enticed me sometimes from my work, but it was seldom, by stealth, and occasioned no scandal; and to show that I did not think myself above my profession, I conveyed home sometimes in a wheelbarrow the paper I had purchased at the warehouses.

I thus obtained the reputation of being an industrious young man, and very punctual in his payments. The merchants who imported articles of stationery solicited my custom; others offered to furnish me with books, and my little trade went on prosperously.

Meanwhile, the credit and business of Keimer diminishing every day, he was at last forced to sell his stock to satisfy his creditors; and he betook himself to Barbadoes, where he lived for some time in a very impoverished state. His apprentice, David Harry, whom I had instructed while I worked with

Keimer, having bought his materials, succeeded in the business. I was apprehensive at first of finding in Harry a powerful competitor, as he was allied to an opulent and respectable family; I therefore proposed a partnership, which, happily for me, he rejected with disdain. He was extremely proud, thought himself a fine gentleman, lived extravagantly, and pursued amusements which suffered him to be scarcely ever at home; consequently, he fell into debt, neglected his business, and business neglected him. Finding in a short time nothing to do in the country, he followed Keimer to Barbadoes. carrying his printing materials with him. There the apprentice employed his old master as a journevman. They were continually quarrelling; and Harry, still getting in debt, was obliged at last to sell his press and types and to return to his old occupation of husbandry in Pennsylvania. person who purchased them employed Keimer to manage the business; but he died a few years after.

I had now at Philadelphia no competitor but Bradford, who, being in easy circumstances, did not engage in the printing of books, except now and then as workmen chanced to offer themselves, and was not anxious to extend his trade. He had, however, one advantage over me, as he had the direction of the post-office, and was of consequence supposed to have better opportunities of obtaining news. His paper was also supposed to be more advantageous to advertising customers; and in consequence of that supposition, his advertisements were much more numerous than mine: this was a source of great

profit to him, and disadvantageous to me. It was to no purpose that I really procured other papers and distributed my own by means of the post: the public took for granted my inability in this respect; and I was indeed unable to conquer it in any other mode than by bribing the postboys, who served me only by stealth, Bradford being so illiberal as to forbid them. This treatment of his excited my resentment; and my disgust was so rooted, that when I afterwards succeeded him in the post-office, I took care to avoid copying his example.

I had hitherto continued to board with Godfrey. who, with his wife and children, occupied part of my house, and half of the shop for his business, at which indeed he worked very little, being always absorbed by mathematics. Mrs Godfrey formed a wish of marrying me to the daughter of one of her relations. She contrived various opportunities of bringing us together, till she saw that I was captivated, which was not difficult, the lady in question possessing great personal merit. The parents encouraged my addresses by inviting me continually to supper, and leaving us together, till at last it was time to come to an explanation. Mrs Godfrey undertook to negotiate our little treaty. I gave her to understand that I expected to receive with the young lady a sum of money that would enable me at least to discharge the remainder of the debt for my printing materials. It was then, I believe, not more than a hundred pounds. She brought me for answer that they had no such sum at their disposal. I observed that it might easily be obtained by a mortgage on their house. The reply to this was, after a few days' interval, that they did not approve of the match; that they had consulted Bradford, and found that the business of a printer was not lucrative; that my letters would soon be worn out, and must be supplied by new ones; that Keimer and Harry had failed, and that, probably, I should do so too. Accordingly, they forbade me the house, and the young lady was confined. I know not if they had really changed their minds, or if it was merely an artifice, supposing our affections to be too far engaged for us to desist, and that we should contrive to marry secretly, which would leave them at liberty to give or not as they pleased. But, suspecting this motive, I never went again to their house.

Some time after, Mrs Godfrey informed me that they were favourably disposed towards me, and wished me to renew the acquaintance; but I declared a firm resolution never to have anything more to do with the family. The Godfreys expressed some resentment at this; and as we could no longer agree, they changed their residence, leaving me in possession of the whole house. I then resolved to take no more lodgers. This affair having turned my thoughts to marriage, I looked round me, and made overtures of alliance in other quarters; but I soon found that the profession of a printer being generally looked upon as a poor trade, I could expect no money with a wife, at least if I wished her to possess any other charm.

As a neighbour and old acquaintance, I had kept up a friendly intimacy with the family of Miss Read.

Her parents had retained an affection for me from the time of my lodging in their house. I was often invited thither; they consulted me about their affairs, and I had been sometimes serviceable to them. I was touched with the unhappy situation of their daughter, who was almost always melancholy, and continually seeking solitude. I regarded my forgetfulness and inconstancy, during my abode in London, as the principal part of her misfortune, though her mother had the candour to attribute the fault to herself rather than to me, because, after having prevented our marriage previously to my departure, she had induced her to marry another in my absence.

Our mutual affection revived: but there existed great obstacles to our union. Her marriage was considered, indeed, as not being valid, the man having, it was said, a former wife still living in England; but of this it was difficult to obtain a proof at so great a distance; and though a report prevailed of his being dead, yet we had no certainty of it; and, supposing it to be true, he had left many debts. for the payment of which his successors might be We ventured, nevertheless, in spite of all these difficulties; and I married her on the 1st of September 1730. None of the inconveniences we had feared happened to us. She proved to me a good and faithful companion, and contributed essentially to the success of my shop. We prospered together, and it was our mutual study to render each other happy. Thus I corrected as well as I could this great error of my youth.

Our club was not at that time established at a tavern. We held our meetings at the house of Mr Grace, who appropriated a room to the purpose. Some member observed one day that as our books were frequently quoted in the course of our discussions, it would be convenient to have them collected in the room in which we assembled in order to be consulted upon occasion; and that, by thus forming a common library of our individual collections, each would have the advantage of using the books of all the other members, which would nearly be the same as if he possessed them all himself. The idea was approved, and we accordingly brought such books as we thought we could spare, which were placed at the end of the club-room. They amounted not to so many as we expected; and though we made considerable use of them, yet some inconveniences resulting from want of care, it was agreed, after about a year, to discontinue the collection, and each took away such books as belonged to him.

It was now (1731) that I first started the idea of establishing, by subscription, a public library. I drew up the proposals, had them engrossed in form by Brockden, the attorney; and my project succeeded, as will be seen in the sequel.

[We close here the narrative of Franklin's life as written by himself, and continue it as follows.]





## CHAPTER VII.

## CONTINUED SUCCESS.

HE effort made by Franklin to promote a

taste for literature in Philadelphia by the establishment of a public library was eminently successful. The number of subscribers increased; and in 1742 the company was incorporated by the name of 'The Library Company of Phila-Several other companies were formed in delphia.' the city in imitation of it, and the whole were finally united in one institution. In 1789 a neat and ornamental edifice was erected on the east side of Fifth Street, opposite to the Statehouse Square, for the reception of the library established by Franklin. Over the front door was a marble statue of its founder, executed in Italy, and presented by William In 1880 the Philadelphia Library was removed to more commodious premises in Locust The number of books at present is about 123,000, exclusive of the collection bequeathed to it by Mr Logan, called the Loganian Collection, which is about 11,000 volumes. In 1869, Dr James Rush left a sum amounting to over £200,000 for the purpose of erecting a building to be called the 'Ridgeway branch'

of the library. A beautiful building in the Doric style was accordingly erected at the corner of Broad and Christian Streets for this library.

Franklin was much gratified by the success of his scheme, and continued by his example to encourage habits of industry in the young, and to raise a taste for literary and other rational recreations. find him, at the early age of twenty-five or twentysix, fairly embarked in life as a tradesman, citizen, and a lover of literary and scientific pursuits. first consideration was scrupulous attention to business and to his family. He mentions, in the papers which he left behind him, that at this period of his life he avoided all frivolous amusements; his only relaxation being in a game at chess, of which he was very fond. He methodised the expenditure of his time through the twenty-four hours of the day, devoting so many hours to sleep, so many to work, and the remainder to self-examination and improvement. One of his rules consisted of an obligation to rise every morning at five o'clock, by which means he enjoyed an opportunity of self-instruction, which was and is commonly lost by young men. point in the habits of Franklin exceedingly worthy of imitation; for there can be little doubt that early rising was one of the chief causes of his success in life. Among other studies to which he directed his attention at this period was that of languages, to which his capacity seems to have been suitable. mentions that he thus acquired a competent knowledge of the French, Italian, and Spanish languages, and also made himself acquainted in some degree with Latin, of which he had acquired only a limited knowledge at school.

He now laid down a set of rules of conduct referring to the exercise of certain virtues, to which he made the most manful endeavour to conform. also kept a journal of his behaviour, to enable him to observe how he advanced in virtue, or moral and religious perfection, and how far he abstained from To this journal he attached certain mottoes. one of which was a verse from the Proverbs of Solomon, in which Wisdom is eulogised: 'Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.' Another of his mottoes was in the form of a pious aspiration or prayer in which he implored the divine blessing on his labours, and an increase of that wisdom which was most beneficial to him. One of his favourite passages, which he occasionally repeated, was the beautiful address to the Deity in Thomson's poem on the Seasons:

Father of light and life, thou God supreme!
O teach me what is good: teach me thyself;
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
From every low pursuit; fill my soul
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure;
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss!

In following out these plans of study and self-regulation, he encountered numberless obstructions, both from the forms of society and from the natural proneness to err common to all human beings. But it does not appear that he permitted any of these to

divert him from the course which he had prescribed. Conscious of rectitude of intention, and delighted with the pleasure which he derived from moral and intellectual pursuits, he treated the ordinary sarcasms of the world with indifference, and comforted himself with the reflection that the period would perhaps ultimately arrive when his line of conduct would meet with its appropriate reward. Already, indeed, as he tells us, at the very outset of his career in business, his steady industry had gained him several genuine friends.

Of Franklin's intercourse with his family little has been made known, though it is ascertained by a few scattered hints in his writings that he was an affectionate husband and father, and placed much of his happiness in home. In his household affairs the most exact economy prevailed, and for several years after his marriage his breakfast consisted simply of bread and milk, which he ate from a penny earthenware porringer. Fortunately, his wife was as much disposed to be industrious as he was: she assisted him in his business, folded the sheets of books which he printed, kept his shop, and executed other humble but useful duties. By following this industrious and economical plan of living, they gradually accumulated wealth, and were enabled to possess comforts and luxuries which were at first beyond their reach. Still, Franklin was not puffed up by prosperity, but continued to live in a style of simplicity agreeable to the notions he had formed at the outset of his career.

In conducting his business, he happily united the

occupation of a printer with the profession of an author, and thus became the publisher of his own literary productions. No large work, however, was given by him to the world. His writings were chiefly of a minor character, such as detached pamphlets treating of subjects of local import, and short The publication of a weekly newspaper and an annual almanac afforded him the means of giving his ideas to the world; but even with these advantages he did not, as it appears, write much that has been thought worthy of republication in a succeeding His newspaper was the Pennsylvania Gazette, which had been started by Keimer in 1728, and which, after about a twelvemonth's mismanagement, had come into the possession of Franklin and Hugh Meredith. Keimer, who seems to have been an odd mixture of covetousness and eccentricity, started the Gazette in consequence of hearing that Franklin was about to set a newspaper on foot. The braggart style of Keimer's prospectus is curious, even in the present age of puffing. 'Whereas,' says he, 'many have encouraged me to publish a paper of intelligence, and whereas the late Mercury has been so wretchedly performed as to be a scandal to the name of printing—as to be truly styled nonsense in folio; this is therefore to notify that I shall begin in November next a most useful paper, to be entitled the Pennsylvania Gazette, or Universal Instructor. Having dwelt at the fountain of intelligence in Europe, I will be able to give a paper to please all and to offend none at the reasonable expense of ten shillings per annum, proclamation money. It will

exceed all others that ever were in America, and will possess, in fine, the most complete body of history and philosophy ever yet published since the creation. A work of the self-same design has been going on in England by no less than seven dukes, two viscounts, eighteen earls, twenty-two lords, and some hundreds of knights, esquires, &c.; and withal approved and honoured by the wisest king-even the very darling of heaven—King George the First!' The work which Keimer here refers to in so magniloquent a style was Ephraim Chambers's Cyclopædia, published in 1728; and his plan consisted simply of copying the articles from that publication into his projected Alas! his visions of hope ended in a prison before the year had filled its term, and the paper fell into the hands of his rivals whom he had tried to injure. By Franklin's ingenuity, the paper rose in general estimation. It was conducted on a respectable footing, and enlivened either by small pieces from the pen of the editor, or by extracts from the papers of Addison in the Spectator.

Franklin was careful to exclude from the Gazette all matter partaking of the character of personal abuse, to which most of the colonial papers of the period were addicted; at the same time, he was most severe in his strictures on the conduct of men in their public capacity, and was heedless of the consequences. The following anecdote is related as an illustration of his independent feeling as an editor: Not long after he had commenced his duties, he noticed with considerable freedom the public conduct of one or two influential persons in Philadelphia. This cir-

cumstance was regarded with disapprobation by some of his patrons, one of whom undertook to convey to him the opinions of the rest in regard to it. Franklin listened with patience to the reproof, and begged the favour of his friend's company at supper on an evening which he named; at the same time requesting that the other gentlemen who were dissatisfied with him should also attend. The invitation was accepted by Philip Syng, Hugh Roberts, The printer received them and several others. cordially, and his editorial conduct was canvassed. and some advice given. Supper was at last announced, and the guests invited into an adjoining room. Franklin begged the party to be seated, and urged them to help themselves; but the table was only supplied with two puddings, and an earthenware pitcher filled with water! Each guest had a plate, a spoon, and a penny porringer; they were all helped: but none but Franklin could eat—he partook freely of the pudding, and urged his friends to do the same; but it was out of the question—they tasted and tried in vain. When their facetious host saw the difficulty was unconquerable, he rose and addressed them thus: 'My friends, any one who can subsist upon sawdust pudding and water, as I can, needs no man's patronage!'

Franklin's rival in trade, Bradford, at first possessed some advantage over him by being postmaster, thereby having the opportunity of circulating his paper more extensively, and thus rendering it a better vehicle for advertisements, &c. Franklin, in his turn, enjoyed these advantages by being

appointed postmaster of Philadelphia in 1737. Bradford, while in office, had acted ungenerously towards Franklin, preventing as much as possible the circulation of his paper. He had now an opportunity of retaliating, but his nobleness of soul prevented him from making use of it.

At a later date, in 1755, the postmaster-general, Benjamin Franklin, publishes that to aid trade, &c., he gives notice, that thereafter the winter northern mail from Philadelphia to New England, which used to set out but once a fortnight, shall start once a week all the year round, 'whereby answers may be obtained to letters between Philadelphia and Boston in three weeks, which used to require six weeks.' In the present day, the distance betwixt Philadelphia and Boston is travelled in a few hours.

Besides editing his newspaper, he conducted and published an almanac, which he began in 1732, and continued for a period of twenty-five years. This almanac bore the feigned name, Richard Saunders, and hence acquired the title of Poor Richard's Almanac, by which it became extensively known. The leading feature of the work consisted in an array of concise maxims and apothegms of an economical character, distributed here and there throughout the calendar wherever space was left betwixt the names of the holidays. When Poor Richard's Almanac was brought to a close, a considerable number of the maxims were collected in an 'Address to the Reader' in the last number, and entitled 'The Way to Wealth' (see page 215). This admirable digest has been since translated into various languages, and is now widely known. As a commercial speculation, Franklin's almanac was eminently successful; some of its numbers were circulated to the extent of ten thousand copies, which was a prodigious sale in a thinly peopled American province a century and a half ago.

Franklin's literary abilities and the respectability of his character as a citizen gained him considerable popularity in Pennsylvania; and in 1736 he was chosen, without opposition, to be clerk to the General Assembly of the province, an office which brought him an accession of business as a printer and elevated his position in society. His appointment to the office of postmaster to the province in 1737 has already been adverted to. From this period may be dated a new era in his life. began to devote some of his energies to public affairs, but confining himself chiefly to the establishment and improvement of local institutions. One of the first of his measures was the establishment of a system of effective street police in Philadelphia; and another was the forming of a fire-insurance company, which was instituted in 1738. We obtain a glimpse of the wardrobe of Franklin in the year 1738 from an advertisement for stolen clothes, to wit: 'Broadcloth breeches lined with leather, sagathee coat lined with silk, and fine homespun linen shirts.' In 1739, Philadelphia was visited by the celebrated George Whitefield, who, after exciting much religious enthusiasm in England, had conceived that in America his extraordinary gifts might prove still more efficacious. In all parts of the colonies in which he made

his appearance he did create a very great sensation, and particularly in Philadelphia. Franklin, among others, was delighted with the remarkable oratorical powers of Whitefield, which were the result of careful study; and when on one occasion he attended a charity sermon predetermined to give nothing, he was so affected by successive touches of the preacher, that he gave all the money he happened at the time to have in his pockets. With Whitefield he afterwards had some friendly correspondence.

In 1744, Franklin proposed and effected the establishment of a Philosophical Society in Philadelphia, an institution congenial with his intellectual habits, and which still exists as a memorial of his desire for social advancement.

For several years this society was little more than an association of scientific gentlemen for the purpose of aiding one another in their pursuits by conversation and concerted efforts. The meetings of the society were also frequently interrupted during the political troubles of the country; but the activity of its members did not cease, and their labours have been recorded in successive volumes of Transactions. The association now ranks among its members some of the most distinguished men of letters and science in America and Europe. The meetings are held in a handsome and commodious building in Philadelphia, which contains a valuable library and museum of natural history.

About this period, Franklin felt himself called upon, by a sense of public duty, to interfere in preserving the inviolability of the country from warlike

The frontiers of the province became aggression. subject to the repeated inroads and attacks of the wild Indian tribes, in consequence of the war betwixt Great Britain and France having broken out in Franklin roused the people by his writings, and incited them to a general defence. He proposed to a meeting of the citizens of Philadelphia a plan for an association of volunteers, which was immediately approved of, and signed by twelve hundred persons. Copies were instantly circulated throughout the province; and in a short time the number of subscribers amounted to ten thousand. Franklin was chosen colonel of the Philadelphia regiment; but he did not think proper to accept of the honour. His activity at this crisis in colonial affairs gained him the favour and confidence of the governor and council, and paved the way for greater honours being conferred upon him.

The peace of the colony being at length secured, Franklin resumed his active duties in civil life. Perceiving that education was in an exceedingly defective condition in Philadelphia and the country generally, he wrote and published a pamphlet on the subject, and suggested the establishment of an academy on an extended and improved plan for the instruction of youth. This wise and benevolent object attracted the attention it deserved; a seminary was speedily set on foot by public subscription, under the charge of trustees, and it met with a much greater degree of success than its projector had originally contemplated.



## CHAPTER VIII

## EXPERIMENTS IN ELECTRICITY.

URSUITS of a different nature now occupied a large share of the attention of Franklin for some years. Finding himself in the enjoyment of a moderate competence realised by his industry, he considered himself entitled to relax in his mercantile exertions, and to indulge himself a little in scientific pursuits. The branch of physics to which he chiefly directed his attention was that of electricity, which was at this time in its infancy. Electricity is a subtle and mysterious fluid or quality which seems to pervade all nature, and has received its name from the Greek word electron, signifying amber, in which substance it was supposed by the ancients exclusively to reside, and from which it could be evolved in the form of bright sparks by rubbing. Upon this almost unknown property of matter, Franklin, in 1746, engaged in a course of experiments with all the ardour and thirst for discovery which characterised the philosophers of that day. He was enabled to do so by means of some apparatus which he purchased from a Dr Spence, a Scottish gentleman whom he had heard lecture on the subject of electricity at Boston, during a recent short visit to that town. He was further induced to enter upon his course of experiments in consequence of Mr Peter Collinson, a gentleman of scientific acquirements in London, having presented the Library Company of Philadelphia with a glass tube suitable for exhibiting certain electrical phenomena, at the same time communicating to Franklin some interesting intelligence of what had lately been done in this branch of experimental philosophy. Nothing more was required to excite the mind of Franklin on the subject. For about two years he was assiduous in exploring the hidden principles of electrical action, and at length, in the year 1748, he made the important discovery that there are two kinds or affections of electricity, one of which he called the positive, and the other the negative—and that it is by first disturbing the natural balance subsisting between these two states, and then restoring the equilibrium by bringing them into connection, that an explosive effect is produced. This discovery led him to conjecture that lightning is identical with electrical sparks, and is produced in the atmosphere by an effort of nature to restore the harmonious balance of electricity in the clouds or in the air, which has been some way disturbed. In the year 1749 he published his opinion on these points, and adduced many particulars in which the external phenomena of lightning and electricity agree. In the same year he conceived the bold idea of ascertaining the truth of his doctrine by actually drawing down the lightning by means of sharp-pointed iron

rods raised into the region of the clouds. Even in this extraordinary inquiry, his passion to be useful to mankind displays itself in a powerful manner. Admitting the identity of electricity and lightning, and knowing the power of points in repelling bodies charged with electricity, and in conducting their fire silently and imperceptibly, he suggested the idea of securing houses, ships, &c. from being damaged by lightning by erecting pointed iron rods that should rise some feet above the most elevated part, and descend some feet into the ground or the water. The effect of these, he concluded, would be either to prevent a stroke by repelling the cloud beyond the striking distance, or by drawing off the electrical fire which it contained: or if they could not effect this, they would at least conduct the electric matter to the earth without any injury to the building.

It was not until the summer of 1752 that he was enabled to complete his grand discovery by experiment. The plan which he had originally proposed was to erect on some high tower, or other elevated place, a sentry-box, from which should rise a pointed iron rod, insulated by being fixed in a cake of resin. Electrified clouds passing over this would, he conceived, impart to it a portion of their electricity, which would be rendered evident to the senses by sparks being emitted when a key, the knuckle, or other conductor was presented to it. Philadelphia at this time afforded no opportunity of trying an experiment of this kind. While Franklin was waiting for the erection of a spire, it occurred to him that he might have more ready access to the region

of clouds by means of a common kite. He prepared one by fastening two cross sticks to a silk handkerchief, which could not suffer so much from the rain as paper. To the upright stick was affixed an iron point. The string was, as usual, of hemp, except the lower end, which was silk. Where the hempen string terminated, a key was fastened. With this apparatus, on the appearance of a thundergust approaching, he went out to the common, accompanied by his son, to whom alone he communicated his intentions, well knowing the ridicule which, too generally for the interests of science, awaits unsuccessful experiments in philosophy. He placed himself under a shade to avoid the rainhis kite was raised—a thunder-cloud passed over it—no sign of electricity appeared. He almost despaired of success, when suddenly he observed the loose fibres of his string to move towards an erect He now presented his knuckle to the key, and received a strong spark. How exquisite must his sensations have been at this moment! On this experiment depended the fate of his theory. If he succeeded, his name would rank high among those who had improved science; if he failed, he must inevitably be subjected to the derision of mankind, or, what is worse, their pity, as a well-meaning man, but a weak, silly projector. The anxiety with which he looked for the result of his experiment may be easily conceived. Doubts and despair had begun to prevail, when the fact was ascertained in so clear a manner that even the most incredulous could no longer withhold their assent. Repeated sparks were

drawn from the key, a phial was charged, a shock given, and all the experiments made which were then usually performed with electricity.

Franklin now wrote an account of his experiments and theories, in the form of letters to Mr Collinson in England, who published them in a separate volume, under the title of New Experiments and Observations on Electricity at Philadelphia in America. They were read with avidity, and met with the cordial approbation of many learned men in England, particularly of Dr Priestley, who thus speaks of them: 'It is not easy to say whether we are most pleased with the simplicity and perspicuity with which the author proposes every hypothesis of his own, or the noble frankness with which he relates his mistakes when they were corrected by subsequent experiments.'

Dr Priestley was an eminent philosopher and dissenting clergyman (born 1733, died 1804). He spent a considerable part of his life at Leeds, where he presided over a congregation, and pursued his philosophical investigations. As a man of science, he stands high in invention and discovery; and to no one have chemistry and pneumatics been so much indebted. His philanthropic and magnanimous character was akin to that of Franklin, with whom he became acquainted and corresponded.

While Franklin's experiments and theories were received with delight by the learned in all quarters of the globe, they met at first with nothing but contemptuous sneers from the Royal Society of London, which esteemed them as little better than

the whimsicalities of a charlatan or quack. The French philosophers thought very differently of them. An imperfect translation of the letters fell into the hands of the celebrated Buffon, who, notwithstanding the disadvantages under which the work laboured, was much pleased with it, and repeated the experiments with success. vailed on his friend, M. D'Alibard, to give his countrymen a more correct translation of the American electrician. This contributed much towards spreading a knowledge of Franklin's principles in The king, Louis XV., hearing of these France. experiments, expressed a wish to be a spectator of them. A course of experiments was given at the seat of the Duc d'Ayen, at St Germain, by M. de Lor. The applauses which the king bestowed upon Franklin excited in Buffon, D'Alibard, and De Lor. an earnest desire of ascertaining the truth of his theory of thunder-gust. Buffon erected apparatus on the tower of Montbar, M. D'Alibard at Mary-laville, and De Lor at his house in the Estrapade at Paris, some of the highest ground in that capital. D'Alibard's machine first showed signs of electricity. On the 10th of May 1752, a thunder-cloud passed over it, in the absence of M. D'Alibard, and a number of sparks were drawn from it by Coiffier, a joiner, with whom D'Alibard had left directions how to proceed, and by M. Raulet, the prior of Mary-la-ville. An account of this experiment was given to the Royal Academy of Sciences by M. D'Alibard in a Memoir dated May 13, 1752. On the 18th of May, M. de Lor proved equally successful with the apparatus erected at his house. These philosophers stimulated those of other parts of Europe to repeat the experiment, amongst whom none signalised themselves more than Father Beccaria, of Turin, to whose observations science is much indebted. Even the cold regions of Russia were penetrated by the ardour for discovery. Professor Richman of St Petersburg bade fair to add much to the stock of knowledge on this subject, when an unfortunate flash from his conductor put a period to his existence. The friends of science long remembered with regret this amiable martyr to electricity.

By these experiments Franklin's theory was established in a most convincing manner. When the truth of it could no longer be doubted, envy and vanity endeavoured to detract from its merit. That an American, an inhabitant of the obscure city of Philadelphia, the name of which was hardly known. should be able to make discoveries and to frame theories which had escaped the notice of the enlightened philosophers of Europe, was too mortifying to be admitted. He must certainly have taken the idea from some one else. An American, a being of an inferior order, make discoveries! Impossible. It was said that the Abbé Nollet, in 1748, had suggested the idea of the similarity of lightning and electricity in his Lecons de Physique. It is true that the abbé mentions the idea, but he throws it out as a bare conjecture, and proposes no mode of ascertaining the truth of it. He himself acknowledges that Franklin first entertained the bold thought of bringing lightning from the heavens by means of pointed rods fixed in the air. The similarity of lightning and electricity is so strong that we need not be surprised at notice being taken of it as soon as electrical phenomena became familiar. But the honour of forming a regular theory of thunder-gusts—of suggesting a mode of determining the truth of it by experiments, and of putting these experiments in practice, and thus establishing the theory upon a firm and solid basis—is incontestably due to Franklin. D'Alibard, who made the first experiments in France, says that he only followed the track which Franklin had pointed out.

Besides these great principles, Franklin's letters on electricity contain a number of facts and hints which have contributed greatly towards reducing this branch of knowledge to a science. They have been translated into most of the European languages, and into Latin. In proportion as they have become known, his principles have been adopted. In later times, the knowledge of electricity has been greatly extended; but Franklin's theory as regards the practical benefit to be derived from employing lightning protectors, remains undisturbed.

The house No. 141 High Street, on the north side, between Third and Fourth Streets, was originally the residence of Dr Franklin, and was the first house in Philadelphia which ever had a lightning rod affixed to it. This was put up by Franklin. The rod came into the bedchamber in the second story on the gable end, eastern side, and there, being cut off from its communication with the rod descending to the ground, the intermediate space—about one

yard—was filled up with a range or chime of bells, which, whenever an electric cloud passed over the place, was set to ringing and throwing out sparks of electricity. These bells remained some time after Daniel Wister occupied the house, and were at last reluctantly taken down to quiet the fears of his wife.

During the time of his performing experiments in electricity, Franklin paid considerable attention to the principles of heat in application to the purposes of warming houses. In 1745 he published an account of his newly invented Pennsylvania fireplaces, and endeavoured to show their superiority to others in His invention consisted chiefly in making stoves or fireplaces of such a construction that they radiated heated air into the apartment, and effected a saving of fuel; but while this plan is at once effectual and economical, later investigations have decided that the air so heated is too much dried. and is therefore rendered unwholesome, and unsuitable for close apartments. Franklin likewise wrote and published some papers at this period on the subject of smokiness in chimneys, which were republished in England, though, we believe, in a form altered from the original.

In the year 1747 he became a member of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania, by being appointed as a representative burgess for the city of Philadelphia. Warm disputes at this time subsisted between the Assembly and a class of landholders of old standing, called proprietaries, who claimed the peculiar privilege of not being subject to taxation. Franklin, a friend to the principles of

justice from his infancy, and an enemy of aristocratic assumptions, soon distinguished himself as a steady opponent of the unjust schemes of the proprietaries. He was looked up to as the head of the opposition; and to him have been attributed many of the spirited replies of the Assembly to the messages of the governors. His influence in the body was very great. This arose not from any superior powers of eloquence; he spoke but seldom, and he never was known to make anything like an elaborate harangue. His speeches often consisted of a single sentence, or of a well-told story, the moral of which was obviously to the point. He never attempted the flowery fields of oratory. His manner was plain and mild. His style in speaking was like that of his writings-simple, unadorned, and remarkably concise. With this plain manner and his penetrating and solid judgment, he was able to confound the most eloquent and subtle of his adversaries, to confirm the opinions of his friends, and to make converts of the unprejudiced who had opposed him. With a single observation, he often rendered of no avail an elegant and lengthy discourse, and determined the fate of a question of importance.

About the year 1751, an eminent physician of Philadelphia, Dr Bond, considering the deplorable state of the poor when visited with disease, conceived the idea of establishing an hospital. Notwithstanding very great exertions on his part, he was able to interest few people so far in his benevolent plan as to obtain subscriptions from them. Unwilling that his scheme should prove

abortive, he sought the aid of Franklin, which was immediately granted. Their united efforts were attended with success. Considerable sums were subscribed, but they were still short of what was Franklin now made another exertion. He applied to the Assembly; and, after some opposition, obtained leave to bring in a bill specifying, that as soon as two thousand pounds were subscribed, the same sum should be drawn from the treasury by the Speaker's warrant, to be applied to the purposes of the institution. The opposition. as the sum was granted upon a contingency which they supposed would never take place, were silent, and the bill passed. The friends of the plan now redoubled their efforts to obtain subscriptions to the amount stated in the bill, and were soon successful. This was the foundation of the Pennsylvania Hospital, an institution which continues to bear testimony to the humanity of the citizens of Philadelphia.

Dr Franklin had conducted himself so well in the office of postmaster, and had shown himself to be so well acquainted with the business of that department, that it was thought expedient to raise him to a more dignified station. In 1753 he was appointed deputy postmaster-general for the British colonies. The profits arising from the postage of letters formed no inconsiderable part of the revenue which the crown of Great Britain derived from these colonies. In the hands of Franklin, it is said that the post-office in America yielded annually thrice as much as that of Ireland.

The matter of public importance in which Franklin was next engaged was the drawing up, in 1754, of a scheme of union of the various colonies, for mutual protection against the apparently interminable attacks of the Indians, and also the encroachments of the French. The scheme was approved of by the different provinces, but was finally rejected by the British ministry, who dreaded seeing the colonists united in their interests, or adopting any means for common defence. The proposition which had been made for establishing a plan of general protection was not the result of merely theoretic fears. 1753, the French colonists in Canada and the vale of the Mississippi made encroachments on the boundaries of Virginia, against which remonstrances had no effect. In the ensuing year, a body of men was sent out by the British provincials, under the command of George Washington, who, though a very young man, had, by his conduct in the preceding year, shown himself worthy of such an important Whilst marching to take possession of a post at the junction of the rivers Alleghany and Monongahela, in the upper part of the Ohio, he was informed that the French had already erected a fort there. The modern and flourishing town of Pittsburg occupies the site of this fort. A detachment of the enemy was sent to oppose his advance. fied himself as strongly as time and circumstances would permit, but was compelled to surrender. This he did on honourable terms for himself and men, and returned to Virginia. The government of Great Britain now thought it necessary to interfere.

the year 1755, General Braddock, with some regiments of regular troops and provincial levies, was sent to dispossess the French of the posts upon which they had seized. After the men were all ready, a difficulty occurred which had nearly prevented the expedition. This was the want of wagons. Franklin now stepped forward, and with the assistance of his son, in a little time procured a hundred and fifty. Braddock unfortunately fell into an ambuscade, and perished with a number of his men. who had accompanied him as an aide-de-camp, and had warned him in vain of his danger, now displayed great military talents in effecting a retreat of the remains of the army, and in forming a junction with the rear, under Colonel Dunbar, upon whom the chief command now devolved. With some difficulty they brought their little body to a place of safety. but they found it necessary to destroy their wagons and baggage, to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy. For the wagons which he had furnished, Franklin had given bonds to a large The owners declared their intention of amount. obliging him to make a restitution of their property. Had they put their threats in execution, ruin must inevitably have been the consequence. Shirley, finding that he had incurred those debts for the service of government, made arrangements to have them discharged, and released Franklin from his disagreeable situation.

The alarm which spread through the colonies after the defeat of Braddock was very great; and preparations for war were everywhere made. In Penn-

sylvania, the prevalence of the Quaker interest prevented the adoption of any system of defence which would compel the citizens to bear arms. Franklin introduced into the Assembly a bill for organising a militia, by which every man was allowed to take arms or not, as to him should appear fit. Quakers being thus left at liberty, suffered the bill to pass; for although their principles would not suffer them to fight, they had no objections to their In consequence of neighbours fighting for them. this act a very respectable militia was formed. The scene of impending danger infused a military spirit in all whose religious tenets were not opposed to war. Franklin was appointed colonel of a regiment in Philadelphia, which consisted of 1200 men.

The north-western frontier being invaded by the enemy, it became necessary to adopt measures for its defence. Franklin was directed by the governor to take charge of this. A power of raising men and of appointing officers to command them was vested in him. He soon levied a body of troops, with which he repaired to the place at which their presence was necessary. Here he built a fort, and placed a garrison in such a posture of defence as would enable them to withstand the inroads to which the inhabitants had been previously exposed. mained here for some time, in order the more completely to discharge the trust committed to him. Some business of importance at length rendered his presence necessary in the Assembly, and he returned to Philadelphia.

The defence of her colonies was a great expense to

Great Britain. The most effectual mode of lessening this was to put arms into the hands of the inhabitants and to teach them their use. But England wished not that the Americans should become acquainted with their own strength. She was apprehensive that, as soon as this period arrived, they would no longer submit to that monopoly of their trade, which to them was highly injurious, but extremely advantageous to the mother-country. In comparison with the profits of this, the expense of maintaining armies and fleets to defend them was trifling. She sought to keep them dependent upon her for protection—the best plan which could be devised for retaining them in peaceable subjection. The least appearance of a military spirit was therefore to be guarded against; and although a war then raged, the act for organising a militia was disapproved of by the ministry. The regiments which had been formed under it were disbanded, and the defence of the province intrusted to regular troops.

The disputes between the proprietaries and the people continued in full force, although a war was raging on the frontiers. Not even the sense of danger was sufficient to reconcile, for ever so short a time, their jarring interests. The Assembly still insisted upon the justice of taxing the proprietary estates, but the governors constantly refused their assent to this measure, without which no bill could pass into a law. Enraged at the obstinacy, and what they conceived to be unjust proceedings of their opponents, the Assembly at length determined to apply to the mother-country for relief. A petition

was addressed to the king in council, stating the inconveniences under which the inhabitants laboured from the attention of the proprietaries to their private interests, to the neglect of the general welfare of the community, and praying for redress. Franklin was appointed to present this address, as agent for the province of Pennsylvania, and departed from America in June 1757.





## CHAPTER IX.

SECOND VISIT TO ENGLAND-1757.

RANKLIN sailed from New York, on his

important mission as agent for the colony of Pennsylvania, towards the end of June 1757, and after an uninteresting voyage, he arrived at Falmouth, on the coast of England, on the 17th of the following July. In this expedition his son William Franklin accompanied him. From Falmouth he proceeded by land to London, examining on his way the remarkable Druidic remains of Stonehenge, on Salisbury Plain. Franklin lost no time in laying before the Privy-council the question in dispute between the colonists generally and the landholders or proprietaries. These persons, who claimed exemption from taxation on no rational principle, were either the descendants of Penn, the original founder of Pennsylvania, or their successors in their estates, and it was against the united force of these parties and their friends that Franklin had to make head. The cause was amply discussed before the Privycouncil; and after some time spent in debate, a proposal was made that Franklin should solemnly engage that the proposed assessment should be so made as that the proprietary estates should pay no more than a due proportion. This he agreed to perform—the opposition was withdrawn, and tranquillity was thus once more restored to the province.

The mode in which this dispute was terminated is a remarkable proof of the high opinion entertained of Franklin's integrity and honour, even by those who considered him as inimical to their views. Nor was their confidence ill founded. The assessment was made upon the strictest principle of equity; and the proprietary estates bore only a proportionable share of the expenses of supporting government.

After the completion of this important business, Franklin remained at the court of Great Britain as agent for the province of Pennsylvania. The extensive knowledge which he possessed of the situation of the colonies, and the regard which he always manifested for their interests, occasioned his appointment to the same office by the colonies of Massachusetts, Maryland, and Georgia. His conduct in this situation was such as rendered him still more dear to his countrymen.

During his residence in England he rendered some service to the state by writing a pamphlet in favour of the projected conquest of Canada by the British. The province of Canada was at this time, as already mentioned, in the possession of the French, with whom Great Britain was now at war. The trade with the Indians—for which its situation was very convenient—was exceedingly lucrative. The French traders here found a market for their commodities, and received in return large quantities of rich furs,

which they disposed of at a high price in Europe. Whilst the possession of this country was highly advantageous to France, it was a grievous inconvenience to the inhabitants of the British colonies. Indians were almost generally desirous to cultivate the friendship of the French, by whom they were abundantly supplied with arms and ammunition. Whenever a war happened, the Indians were ready to fall upon the frontiers, and this they frequently did, even when Great Britain and France were at peace. From these considerations, it appeared to be the interest of Great Britain to gain possession of. But the importance of such an acquisition was not well understood in England. Franklin about this time published his Canada pamphlet, in which, in a very forcible manner, he pointed out the advantages which would result from the conquest of this An expedition against it was planned, and province. the command given to General Wolfe. His success is well known. By the battle of Quebec, fought on 13th September 1759, and in which the British were completely victorious, the French power was extinguished in America. By the treaty of 1762, Canada and other possessions belonging to France were ceded to Great Britain.

Franklin remained in Great Britain from July 1757 till August 1762, a period of five years, during which he had an opportunity of indulging in the society of those friends whom his merits had procured him while at a distance. The regard which they entertained for him was rather increased by a personal acquaintance. The Royal Society of London, which

had at first scornfully refused to acknowledge the correctness of his philosophical experiments, now thought it an honour to rank him amongst its fellows. Other societies of Europe were equally ambitious of enrolling him as a member. He made excursions to different parts of the country along with his son, and both were everywhere treated as guests worthy of distinction. They visited Scotland in the end of autumn 1759, when the university of St Andrews took the opportunity of conferring upon Franklin the degree of Doctor of Laws. Its example was followed by the universities of Edinburgh and Oxford. He was also received with cordiality by the Scottish luminaries of the period, in particular by Henry Home, usually called Lord Kames, a gentleman of congenial character, and equally fond of literary pursuits.

Henry Home was born at his father's country seat of Kames, in Berwickshire, in 1696. Being a younger son, with no patrimony, and being naturally acute and industrious, he studied for the Scottish bar: and after a certain period, from the great abilities he displayed as a lawyer, he was raised to the bench, on which occasion he assumed the official designation of Lord Kames. From his youth he had a turn for metaphysical disquisition, and maintained a correspondence with Bishops Berkeley and Butler. Dr Clarke, and other eminent reasoners. In 1761 he published his Introduction to the Art of Thinking. which was followed, in 1762, by his Elements of Criticism. These works have enjoyed considerable popularity, but are perhaps less generally known than his Sketches of the History of Man, published originally in 1773. He was, besides, the author of a number of minor works and law treatises. Lord Kames's character was one of great benevolence and public spirit. He was fond of rural occupations, and is reckoned one of the chief agricultural improvers of Scotland. His successful scheme of reclaiming the extensive tract of morass called Blair Drummond Moss (of which he came into possession in right of his wife), has been often cited as a wonderful effort of genius and perseverance. Lord Kames died in 1782 at the advanced age of eighty-six.

Franklin passed some time with Lord Kames at his country seat on the banks of the Tweed. This laid the foundation of a friendship and correspondence between these two eminent men which subsisted during their joint lives. In a letter written by Franklin to Lord Kames on his return to London, in January 1760, the following passages occur:

'How unfortunate I was that I did not press upon you and Lady Kames [Mrs Home] more strongly to favour us with your company farther. How much more agreeable would our journey have been if we could have enjoyed you as far as York. We could have beguiled the way by discoursing of a thousand things that now we may never have an opportunity of considering together; for conversation warms the mind, enlivens the imagination, and is continually starting fresh game, that is immediately pursued and taken, and would never have occurred in the duller intercourse of epistolary correspondence; so that, whenever I reflect on the great pleasure and advan-

tage I received from the free communication of sentiments in the conversation we had at Kames and in the little agreeable rides to the Tweedside, I shall ever regret our premature parting.

'No one can more sincerely rejoice than I do on the reduction of Canada; and this not merely as I am a colonist, but as I am a Briton. I have long been of opinion that the foundations of the future arandeur and stability of the British empire lie in America; and though, like other foundations, they are low and little seen, they are nevertheless broad. and strong enough to support the greatest political structure human wisdom ever yet erected. therefore by no means for restoring Canada. keep it, all the country from St Lawrence to Mississippi will in another century be filled with British people; Britain itself will become vastly more populous, by the immense increase of its commerce; the Atlantic sea will be covered with your trading ships; and your naval powers thence continually increasing. will extend your influence round the whole globe and over the world! If the French remain in Canada, they will continually harass our colonies by the Indians, and impede, if not prevent, their growth; your progress to greatness will at best be slow, and give room for many accidents that may for ever prevent it. But I refrain, for I see you begin to think my notions extravagant, and look upon them as the ravings of a mad prophet.

'My son joins with me in the most respectful compliments to you and Lady Kames. Our conversation till we came to York was chiefly a recollection of what we had seen and heard, the pleasure we had enjoyed, and the kindnesses we had received in Scotland, and how far that country had exceeded our expectations. On the whole, I must say I think the time we spent there was six weeks of the densest happiness I have met with in any part of my life; and the agreeable and instructive society we found there in such plenty, has left so pleasing an impression on my memory, that, did not strong connections draw me elsewhere, I believe Scotland would be the country I should choose to spend the remainder of my days in.'

To Lord Kames he again writes in 1760, and refers to a work upon which he had been some time engaged: 'I will shortly send you a copy of the chapter you are pleased to mention in so obliging a manner; and shall be extremely obliged in receiving a copy of the collection of Maxims for the Conduct of Life, which you are preparing for the use of your children. I purpose likewise a little work for the benefit of youth, to be called The Art of Virtue. From the title, I think you will hardly conjecture what the nature of such a book may be. I must therefore explain it a little. Many people lead bad lives that would gladly lead good ones, but know not how to make the change. They have frequently resolved and endeavoured it, but in vain. because their endeavours have not been properly conducted. To exhort people to be good, to be just. to be temperate, &c., without showing them how they shall become so, seems like the ineffectual charity mentioned by the apostle, which consisted in saying to the hungry, the cold, and the naked, be ye fed, be ve warmed, be ve clothed, without showing them how they should get food, fire, or clothing. Most people have naturally some virtues, but none have naturally all the virtues. To acquire those that are wanting. and secure what we acquire, as well as those we have naturally, is the subject of an art. It is as properly an art as painting, navigation, or architecture. If a man would become a painter, navigator, or architect, it is not enough that he is advised to be one, that he is convinced by the arguments of his adviser that it would be for his advantage to be one, and that he resolves to be one; but he must also be taught the principles of the art, be shown all the methods of working, and how to acquire the habits of using properly all the instruments; and thus regularly and gradually he arrives by practice at some perfection in the art. If he does not proceed thus, he is apt to meet with difficulties that discourage him, and make him drop the pursuit. My Art of Virtue has also its instruments, and teaches the manner of using them. Christians are directed to have faith in Christ as the effectual means of obtaining the change they desire. It may, when sufficiently strong, be effectual with many; for a full opinion. that a teacher is infinitely wise, good, and powerful. and that he will certainly reward and punish the obedient and disobedient, must give great weight to his precepts, and make them much more attended to by his disciples. But many have this faith in so weak a degree that it does not produce the effect. Our Art of Virtue may therefore be of great service

to those whose faith is unhappily not so strong, and may come in aid of its weakness. Such as are naturally well disposed, and have been carefully educated, so that good habits have been early established and bad ones prevented, have less need of this art: but all may be more or less benefited by it. is, in short, to be adapted for universal use. imagine what I have now been writing will seem to savour of great presumption: I must therefore speedily finish my little piece, and communicate the manuscript to you, that you may judge whether it is possible to make good such pretensions. I shall at the same time hope for the benefit of your corrections.' It does not appear that the work here mentioned was ever given to the public.

While resident in England, Franklin continued to devote some degree of attention to philosophical pursuits, and to keep up a correspondence with eminent men of science in different quarters of Europe. Some experiments on the cold produced by evaporation, made by Dr Cullen, had been communicated to him by Professor Simson of Glasgow. These he repeated, and found that, by the evaporation of ether in the exhausted receiver of an air-pump, so great a degree of cold was produced, even in a warm state of the atmosphere, that water was converted into ice. This discovery he applied to the solution of a number of phenomena in nature, particularly a singular fact, which philosophers vainly had endeavoured to account for-namely, that the temperature of the human body and blood, when in health, never exceeds 98 degrees of Fahrenheit's thermometer, although the atmosphere which surrounds it may be heated to a much greater degree. This he attributed to the increased perspiration, and consequent evaporation produced by the heat, and by which evaporation the body was kept at a moderate and agreeable temperature. The explanation shows the usual acuteness of Franklin's mind, but is not that which is now generally received.

About this time Franklin also paid some attention to the subject of musical tones, produced by rubbing the brims of glasses with a wet finger. The tones so elicited had been already generally known. A Mr Puckeridge, an Irishman, by placing on a table a number of glasses of different sizes, and tuning them by partly filling them with water, endeavoured to form an instrument capable of playing tunes. was prevented by an untimely end from bringing his invention to any degree of perfection. After his death some improvements were made upon his plan. The sweetness of the tones induced Dr Franklin to make a variety of experiments; and he at length formed that elegant instrument which he has called the Armonica.

Franklin having accomplished the object of his mission, and spent some years agreeably as colonial agent in England, returned to America in August 1762. About the period of his departure, his son received an appointment to the office of governor of New Jersey, for which he is said to have been well qualified by his talents.

The following account of Franklin's voyage home, and the events of his life until his next visit to

England, is given by himself in a letter to Lord Kames, dated Craven Street, London, June 2, 1765: 'You require my history from the time I set sail for America. I left England about the end of August 1762, in company with ten sail of merchant-ships, under convoy of a man-of-war. We had a pleasant passage to Madeira, where we were kindly received and entertained, our nation being then in high honour with the Portuguese, on account of the protection we were then affording them against the united invasions of France and Spain. It is a fertile island, and the different heights and situations among its mountains afford such different temperaments of air, that all the fruits of northern and southern countries are produced there: corn, grapes, apples, peaches, oranges, lemons, plantains, bananas, &c. Here we furnished ourselves with fresh provisions and refreshments of all kinds; and after a few days proceeded on our voyage, running southward till we got into the trade-winds, and then with them westward till we drew near the coast of America. The weather was so favourable, that there were few days in which we could not visit from ship to ship, dining with each other, and on board the man-of-war, which made the time pass agreeably, much more so than when one goes in a single ship; for this was like travelling in a moving village. with all one's neighbours about one. On the 1st of November I arrived safe and well at my own house, after an absence of near six years—found my wife and daughter well; the latter grown quite a woman, with many amiable accomplishments acquired in my absence, and my friends as hearty and affectionate as ever, with whom my house was filled for many days, to congratulate me on my return. I had been chosen yearly during my absence to represent the city of Philadelphia in our Provincial Assembly; and on my appearance in the House, they voted me £3000 sterling for my services in England, and their thanks delivered by the Speaker. In February following, my son arrived, with my new daughter; for with my consent and approbation he married, soon after I left England, a very agreeable West India lady, with whom he is very happy. I accompanied him into his government, where he met with the kindest reception from the people of all ranks. and has lived with them ever since in the greatest harmony. A river only parts that province and ours, and his residence is within seventeen miles of me, so that we frequently see each other. In the spring of 1763 I set out on a tour through all the northern colonies, to inspect and regulate the postoffices in the several provinces. In this journey I spent the summer, travelled about 1600 miles, and did not get home till the beginning of November. The Assembly sitting through the following winter. and warm disputes arising between them and the governor, I became wholly engaged in public affairs; for besides my duty as an Assembly man, I had another trust to execute, that of being one of the commissioners appointed by law to dispose of the public money appropriated to the raising and paying an army to act against the Indians and defend the frontiers. And then in December we had two



insurrections of the back inhabitants of our province, by whom twenty poor Indians were murdered, that had from the first settlement of the province lived among us under the protection of our government. This gave me a good deal of employment; for as the rioters threatened further mischief, and their actions seemed to be approved by an increasing party, I wrote a pamphlet entitled A Narrative, &c., which I think I sent you, to strengthen the hands of our weak government, by rendering the proceedings of the rioters unpopular and odious. This had a good effect; and afterwards, when a great body of them with arms marched towards the capital, in defiance of the government, with an avowed resolution to put to death 140 Indian converts then under its protection, I formed an association at the governor's request for his and their defence, we having no Nearly 1000 of the citizens accordingly took arms: Governor Penn made my house for some time his headquarters, and did everything by my advice; so that for about forty-eight hours I was a very great man, as I had been once some years before in a time of public danger; but the fighting face we put on, and the reasonings we used with the insurgents (for I went, at the request of the governor and council, with three others, to meet and discourse with them), having turned them back and restored quiet to the city, I became a less man than ever—for I had by these transactions made myself many enemies among the populace—and the governor (with whose family our public disputes had long placed me in an unfriendly light, and the services I

had lately rendered him not being of the kind that make a man acceptable), thinking it a favourable opportunity, joined the whole weight of the proprietary interest to get me out of the Assembly. which was accordingly effected at the last election, by a majority of about 25 in 4000 voters. The House, however, when they met in October, approved of the resolutions taken while I was Speaker, of petitioning the crown for a change of government, and requested me to return to England to prosecute that petition; which service I accordingly undertook, and embarked the beginning of November last, being accompanied to the ship, sixteen miles, by a cavalcade of three hundred of my friends, who filled our sails with their good wishes; and I arrived in thirty days at London. Here I have been ever since engaged in that and other public affairs relating to America, which are like to continue some time longer upon my hands; but I promise you that when I am quit of these, I will engage in no other; and that, as soon as I have recovered the ease and leisure I hope for, the task you require of me, of finishing my Art of Virtue, shall be performed. In the meantime, I must request you would excuse me on this consideration, that the powers of the mind are possessed by different men in different degrees, and that every one cannot, like Lord Kames, intermix literary pursuits and important business without prejudice to either.' [Here follows a dissertation on Scottish music.]

'P.S.—I do promise myself the pleasure of seeing you and my other friends in Scotland before my return to America.'



## CHAPTER X.

## THIRD VISIT TO ENGLAND-1764.

RANKLIN arrived in England for the third time, according to the above statement, in the beginning of December 1764; and in his capacity of agent for the province of Pennsylvania. he was soon involved in the business of the famous Stamp Act. As this event led to most important political changes, it may be serviceable to give a brief explanation of the situation of affairs at this period. About the year 1760, the British parliament began to institute a series of arbitrary regulations for the commerce of the thirteen American colonies belonging to Great Britain. These regulations were exceedingly vexatious, nevertheless they were obeyed by the colonists, though with great dissatisfaction. Proceeding from one step to another, Grenville, the prime minister, in March 1764, laid before parliament a bill for charging certain stamp duties in the American colonies; the ostensible ground of the proposed enactment being the expenses to which the mother-country had been put in conducting the war with the French in Canada, which was for the protection of the colonies. To this project the pro-

vincial agents at once demurred; and when it was made known in America, it was almost universally opposed—the reason for the opposition being that taxation without representation was unconstitutional, and therefore tyrannical. Franklin, who arrived in London a short time before the bill was finally disposed of, made a strenuous opposition to its passing into a law. In spite of every remonstrance, the bill was passed by the House of Commons in March 1765, by a vote of 250 members against 50. Franklin beheld the measure with consternation. Writing an account of it to an American gentleman, he says: 'The sun of liberty is set; the Americans must light the lamps of industry and economy.' The gentleman answered: 'Be assured we shall light torches of quite another kind.' The intelligence of the passing of the Stamp Act, as is well known, excited the Americans to passive resistance, and the law, in point of fact, was inoperative.

Under the Marquis of Rockingham's administration, it appeared expedient to endeavour to calm the minds of the colonists; and the repeal of the odious tax was contemplated. Amongst other means of collecting information on the disposition of the people to submit to it, Dr Franklin was called to the bar of the House of Commons. The examination which he here underwent was published, and contains a striking proof of the extent and accuracy of his information, and the facility with which he communicated his sentiments. Being asked, 'If no regulation with a tax would be submitted to by the colonists,' he answered: 'Their opinion is, that when

aids to the crown are wanted, they are to be asked of the several assemblies, according to the old established usage, who will, as they have always done, grant them freely; and that their money ought not to be given away without their consent by persons at a distance, unacquainted with their circumstances and abilities. The granting aids to the crown is the only means they have of recommending themselves to their sovereign; and they think it extremely hard and unjust that a body of men in which they have no representatives should make a merit to itself by giving and granting what is not its own, but theirs; and thus deprive them of a right they esteem of the utmost value and importance, as it is the security of all their other rights.' In this manner Franklin represented facts and principles of resistance in so strong a point of view, that the inexpediency of the act must have appeared clear to every unprejudiced mind. The act, after some opposition, was repealed, about a year after it was enacted, greatly to the chagrin of its projectors. Our illustration shows the house in which Franklin resided in London.

After the disposal of this weighty affair, in the early part of the year 1766 Franklin made his first visit to the continent of Europe. He proceeded through Holland and Germany, and was everywhere received with the greatest marks of attention from men of science. In the following year he travelled into France, where he met with a no less favourable reception than he had experienced in Germany. He was introduced to a number of literary characters,

and to the king, Louis XV. He again spent some time in France in 1769.



During Franklin's residence in England at this period, he visited different parts of the country to

which he was invited. Among other individuals who sought his society was Dr Shipley, the Bishop of St Asaph, at whose residence at Twyford, in North Wales, in the year 1771, he wrote the account of the early part of his life, addressed to his son, and which has been already given in the present work. While in London, he was not forgetful of his former occupation as an operative printer. One day he visited the printing-office in Lincoln's Inn Fields in which he had wrought forty years before as a journeyman, and the men who were at the time employed at his old press were treated by him to a regalement of porter.

In his letter to Lord Kames, written immediately after his arrival in London in 1765, Franklin promises to revisit Scotland during his stay in Britain. Of his journey to Scotland, in conformity with that promise, no particulars anywhere appear in his writings. We have learned, however, from an aged gentleman in Edinburgh that he visited that city about the year 1771. We mention this circumstance in order to introduce a benevolent trait of his character-namely, the anxious desire he at all times felt to assist young men of ability and industry. While in Edinburgh he took occasion to visit one of the chief printing-offices in the town. In walking through the establishment, he entered into conversation with some of the men, and was particularly pleased with the appearance and character of a lad named Matthewson, who to the business of a printer added that of a cutter and founder of types. Matthewson had originally been a shepherd boy, but



FRANKLIN VISITING HIS OLD PRINTING-PRESS,

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from his earliest years had shown a taste for reading and a turn for carving letters and figures. One day while attending his master's sheep, he was accidentally observed by the minister of the parish to be employing himself in cutting some words on a block of wood with a clasp-knife. The clergyman was so pleased with the ingenuity of the boy, that he interested himself in his fate, and sent him to Edinburgh to pursue the profession of a printer, to which his inclinations seemed to be bent. Shortly afterwards he began to make himself useful by cutting dies for types of a particular description required by his employer, there being no regular typefounder at the time in Edinburgh. It was while thus engaged that he attracted the attention of Dr Franklin, who. struck with his modesty and intelligence, and hearing an excellent character of him from his master, offered to take him to Philadelphia and assist him in the establishing of a foundry for the manufacture of types. Young Matthewson was delighted with and most grateful for the disinterested kindness of Franklin's offer; but from some peculiar circumstances connected with his situation, he was unable to take advantage of it. Mr Matthewson afterwards established a type-foundry in Edinburgh, and died at an advanced age, universally esteemed as a tradesman and citizen.

In the year 1773, Franklin became innocently involved in an awkward affair of diplomacy. Certain letters written by Governor Hutchinson, Mr Oliver, and others in the British interest in America, to persons in power in England, fell into the hands

of a party unknown, who thought fit to hand them to Dr Franklin. The letters contained the most violent invectives against the leading provincialists of Massachusetts, and strenuously advised the adoption of severe measures, to compel the people to obedience to the schemes of the ministry. The sentiments breathed in them struck so vitally at the colonial interests and rights, that Franklin considered it his duty to transmit them to the legislature of Massachusetts, by whom they were received with indignation at their treachery, and forthwith published. Attested copies of them were likewise sent to Great Britain, with an address, praying the king to discharge from office persons who had rendered themselves so obnoxious to the people, and who had shown themselves so unfriendly to their interests. publication of these letters produced a duel between two gentlemen, each of whom was suspected of having been instrumental in procuring them. To prevent any further disputes on this subject. Dr Franklin, in one of the public papers, declared that he had sent them to America, but would give no information concerning the manner in which he had obtained them.

When the address to the king was taken up for examination before the Privy-council, Dr Franklin attended as colonial agent. Dr Priestley, who was present on the occasion—having been introduced as a spectator by Mr Burke—has given an account of this remarkable meeting. The address was opposed in a torrent of intemperate language by Wedderburn, the Solicitor-general, who, besides assailing the principles on which the colonists were acting, took occa-

sion to describe Franklin as a thief, a stealer of letters, an enemy to Britain, and a person no longer to be respected or trusted. 'He has forfeited,' he continued, 'all the respect of societies and men. Into what companies will he hereafter go with an unembarrassed face, or the honest intrepidity of virtue? Men will watch him with a jealous eve: they will hide their papers from him, and lock up their escritoires, &c. To these taunts, in which the voice of mankind has not joined, Franklin calmly listened, not being allowed to defend himself; and he afterwards mentioned that he never on any occasion felt so much the benefit of having a good conscience. Like all similar complaints regarding colonial grievances, the address was declared scandalous and vexatious, and therefore was not entertained by the council or by the king.

Although the parliament of Great Britain had repealed the Stamp Act, it was only upon the principle of expediency. They still insisted upon their right to tax the colonies; and at the same time that the Stamp Act was repealed, an act was passed declaring the right of parliament to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever. This language was used even by the most strenuous opposers of the Stamp Act.

In 1771-3, the opposition to the taxes and restrictive measures of parliament grew daily more resolute in the colonies, and at length the law was utterly set at nought by the people of Boston destroying some shiploads of tea which had been brought to the port. In 1774, a bill was passed by parliament declaring

Boston no longer a port to which shipping should have access, the intelligence of which in America was the signal for armed opposition. Almost the only man who possessed any weight in the British legislature and espoused the cause of the colonists was the Earl of Chatham. This magnanimous statesman had frequent interviews with Franklin, in order to arrive at a proper conclusion regarding the temper of the colonists and the nature of their cause. On the 1st of January 1775, he produced in the House of Lords his celebrated plan of conciliation, Franklin having been previously introduced by him as a spectator of the proceedings. 'Lord Chatham having explained and supported his motion, was followed by Lord Sandwich, who, in the course of a very passionate harangue, declared "that this motion of Chatham's was disgraceful to his name, and should be rejected with contempt—that he did not believe it to be the production of any British peer;" and added, turning towards Franklin, who leaned upon the bar, "I fancy I have in my eye the person who drew it up-one of the bitterest and most mischievous enemies that this country has ever known." Under this allusion, so severe and offensive, although it drew upon him the observation of the whole assembly, Franklin remained, as if unconscious of the application, with a composed aspect, or, to use his own expression in relating the story—as if his countenance had been made of wood. Lord Chatham replied, that were he the first minister of the country, he should not be ashamed to "call publicly to his assistance a person so eminently acquainted with American affairs as the gentleman alluded to, and so ungenerously reflected on; one whom all Europe holds in the highest estimation for his knowledge and wisdom; whom she ranks with her Boyles and her Newtons; who is an honour, not to the English nation only, but to human nature."

Dr Franklin was charmed with the friendship of Chatham, with whom and with Lord Howe he had frequent intercourse; but all efforts, through them and otherwise, to reconcile the differences betwixt the colonies and Britain proved fruitless. He had already lost the favour of the ministry, and his office of postmaster of the colonies had been with-Till this period, Franklin had maintained a warm attachment to Britain, and was most solicitous for the continuance of the colonial connection. therefore deeply deplored the infatuation of the government in pursuing its present line of policy, which he predicted would lead to most fatal results; while he at the same time freely expressed his belief that by doing only simple justice to the American provinces. Britain might continue to govern them, at the expense of a little pen, ink, and paper, for ages. Seeing, however, that Britain was resolved on bringing the matter to a speedy decision by the sword, the whole of Franklin's sentiments of attachment to the mother-country underwent a change, and we must now look upon him as no longer a Briton or a friend of Englishmen, but an American, and a friend of the French and other nations which espoused the cause of his country. Affected by

sorrowful and wounded feelings, he prepared to return home; and in the month of March 1775, set sail from England for the shores of America.

Before Dr Franklin's arrival in Philadelphia, hostilities had commenced betwixt the provincials and the British forces. The battle of Lexington was fought on the 19th of April 1775, and this event may be said to have rendered the breach betwixt the two parties irreparable. Already the provincial assemblies had assumed the character of conventions or congresses, and the day after Franklin's arrival, he was elected a delegate to the Congress of Pennsylvania.

Not long after his election, a committee was appointed, consisting of Lynch, Harrison, and himself, to visit the camp at Cambridge, and, in conjunction with the commander-in-chief, to endeavour to convince the troops, whose term of enlistment was about to expire, of the necessity of their continuing in the field and persevering in the cause of their country.

In the fall of the same year he visited the Canadians, to endeavour to unite them in the common cause of liberty; but they could not be prevailed upon to oppose the measures of the British government. M. le Roy, in a letter annexed to Abbé Fauchet's eulogium of Dr Franklin, states that the ill success of this negotiation was occasioned in a great degree by religious animosities which subsisted between the Canadians and their neighbours.

The momentous question of a total separation from

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Great Britain and the establishment of a national independence was now agitated. Dr Franklin was decidedly in favour of the measure proposed, and had great influence in bringing others over to his sentiments. In June 1776, a general Congress had chosen five of their members to consider the great question, whether the provinces should declare themselves a free and independent nation. These were—Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, Sherman, and Livingston. They reported in favour of so doing; and Congress agreed with them. The Independence of the thirteen United States was solemnly proclaimed on the 4th of July 1776.

The Declaration of Independence of the North American States is conceived in a tone of impassioned but majestic eloquence, descriptive of the wrongs which had been suffered at the hands of the British monarchy, and the consequent right to an absolution from allegiance. It forms one of the most important public documents ever put upon record, and is frequently quoted as a specimen of the clear judgment and forcible style of its composer, Thomas Jefferson—a representative in Congress from Virginia, and one of the most eminent of the revolutionary leaders. He was born in the state of Virginia. April 2, 1743. His father was a gentleman possessing considerable landed property, and at his death left him an estate. Young Jefferson was educated with a view to the legal profession, which he pursued at the bar of the General Court of Virginia till the In 1769, he was elected a member of revolution. the provincial legislature, and signalised himself by

his bold support of the rights of the Americans, in opposition to the arbitrary measures of the government.

While the draft of the Declaration was the subject of discussion in Congress, and when its author was a little hurt by the freedom of the criticisms made upon it by his fellow-members. Dr Franklin, by way of consoling his feelings, stood up, and, to the infinite amusement of the House, related the following anecdote: 'When I was a young man, a friend of mine, who was about to set up in business for himself as a hatter, consulted his acquaintances on the important subject of his sign. The one he had proposed to himself was this: "John Thomson, hatter, makes and sells hats for ready-money," with the sign of a hat. The first friend whose advice he asked suggested that the word "hatter" was entirely superfluous; to which he readily agreeing, it was struck out. The next remarked that it was unnecessary to mention that he required "readymoney" for his hats-few persons wishing credit for an article of no more cost than a hat, or, if they did, he might sometimes find it advisable to give it. These words were accordingly struck out, and the sign then stood—"John Thomson makes and sells hats." A third friend who was consulted, observed, that when a man wished to buy a hat, he did not care who made it: on which two more words were struck out. On showing to another the sign thus abridged to "John Thomson sells hats," he exclaimed. "Why, who will expect you to give them away?" on which cogent criticism two more words were expunged, and nothing of the original sign was left but "John Thomson," with the sign of the hat.'

In 1776. Jefferson retired from his seat Congress, and took his seat in the legislature of Virginia, to which he had been elected. In 1779, he was chosen governor of the state, and continued in the office two years. He afterwards engaged in affairs connected with Congress, and in 1785 was appointed successor to Franklin as minister-plenipotentiary at the French court. He remained in France till the year 1789, when he returned to the United States, and was nominated by Washington to the office of Secretary of State, which he held till 1793, when he resigned. In this year he was elected Vice-president; and in 1800 was chosen President of the United States. At the end of eight years he again retired into private life, from which he never afterwards emerged. He spent his declining years in literary and scientific pursuits. His useful life came to a close on the 4th of July 1826, being the fiftieth anniversary of the most glorious event of his life—the Declaration of Independence.

Jefferson's colleague in preparing the draft of the Declaration of Independence was John Adams, without whose powerful oratorical aid it would not have passed through Congress. Adams was a native of the state of Massachusetts, and was born in the year 1735. His ancestors had left England in 1640 for the wilds of America, in order to enjoy their religious opinions unmolested. He was bred to the study of the law, and was admitted to the degree of barrister-at-law in 1761, and shortly afterwards was

placed in the possession of a small landed estate by In 1770, he was appointed to his father's decease. a seat in the legislature of Massachusetts; and in 1774 was nominated a member of the revolutionary Congress. While Jefferson framed the constitution of Virginia, and Franklin that of Philadelphia, Adams prepared that of Massachusetts, and with He served in France as a comequal success. missioner for a short time along with Franklin, and was the first American minister to London. On his return from Europe, he was appointed Vice-president, the duties of which office he discharged till 1797, when he succeeded to the Presidency vacated by the resignation of Washington. He remained President for his term of four years, during which he was of great service in founding the American navy, and in other respects; but his measures being too strong for the Democrats, and too weak for the Federalists, he lost his re-election, Jefferson being elected President. After his retirement to his farm of Quincy, he occupied himself with agricultural pursuits, obtaining amusement from the literature and politics of the day. He afterwards took a part in public affairs, being in 1820 elected a member of a Convention to revise the constitution of his state. After that his life glided away in uninterrupted tranquillity until the 4th of July 1826, when he breathed his last with the same sentiment on his lips which on that day, fifty years before, he had uttered on the floor of Congress-'Independence for ever!' In the course of the day, while the ringing of bells and firing of cannon aroused him for a moment, he said, 'It is a great and glorious day!' and just before he expired, exclaimed, 'Jefferson survives!' But Jefferson had already, at one o'clock that same day, rendered his spirit into the hands of his Creator.

The British ministry saw, when too late, that it would be their best course to attempt the conciliation of the colonies; still, they had not the good sense to propose an entire redress of grievances. Lord Howe was despatched with power to treat with the leaders of the insurrection; and on his arrival on the American coast, a correspondence took place between him and Dr Franklin on the subject of a reconciliation. Dr Franklin was afterwards appointed, together with John Adams and Edward Rutledge, to wait upon the commissioners in order to learn the extent of their powers, which were found to be only to grant pardons upon submission. These were terms only calculated to excite derision, and the commissioners returned without accomplishing their object.

After the Declaration of Independence, a new form of government for the state of Pennsylvania became necessary; and in the Convention which met at Philadelphia to deliberate on the subject, Dr Franklin was chosen president. The constitution which was resolved upon has been conjectured to be a digest of his principles of government. The single legislature—that is, one house of representatives—and the plural executive seem to have been his favourite tenets.

Successful as the Americans were in their opera-

tions in the field, with General Washington for their commander-in-chief, it became manifest to Congress that assistance in money and military stores was necessary. In order to procure aid in Europe, certain negotiations were set on foot with France; and to hasten these to a happy conclusion, as well as to open a treaty of alliance, Dr Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee were appointed commissioners from Congress to the French court. Deane and Lee were already in France, with the view of raising up friends to the cause and negotiating the transmission of warlike stores.





## CHAPTER XI.

MISSION TO FRANCE.

T was in the month of October 1776 that Franklin, now in his 70th year, set out from Philadelphia on his mission to France, being accompanied in his voyage by two grandchildren, William Temple Franklin and Benjamin Franklin His voyage across the Atlantic was attended with some degree of danger from British privateers and war-vessels, and the ship in which he sailed was several times pursued. Fortunately, it escaped all such attempts at capture; and on the evening of the 3d of December, Franklin and his grandchildren were landed by the captain on the coast of France at Quiberon Bay. Shortly after his arrival in the French capital, he removed to and took up his residence in a villa at Passy, a beautifully situated village on a rising ground on the road to Versailles, near the banks of the Seine, and within two miles of William Temple Franklin acted as his secre-Paris. tary during his residence in France, and he derived much pleasure from his society; the other grandson, Benjamin Franklin Bache, was sent to a boardingschool in Switzerland for the completion of his education. At the period of Franklin's visit to France, he was a widower, his wife having died some time previously.

Franklin was already well known in France, both as a philosopher and as an eminent political character. There was a strong disposition in this country to humble the pride of England by enabling her colonies to acquire independence; and he took care to foster every good disposition, by publishing pamphlets calculated to establish a respectful opinion of the designs and of the political and warlike posture of America. Nevertheless, the government manifested an evident reluctance to make an open declaration in behalf of the colonists at this time. The commissioners were not publicly received; but assistance to a large amount in money and otherwise was secretly given. The court of Louis XVI. only waited for the occurrence of some event of importance, which would afford a cause of siding openly with the Americans and declaring war against Great Britain. At length, when intelligence arrived in France of the whole British army under General Burgoyne having surrendered to the Americans (October 18, 1777), the French ministry lost no time in concluding an alliance, defensive and offensive, with the United States; and in April 1778 despatched a fleet to their assistance, under the command of Count d'Estaing.

These occurrences, as a matter of course, caused the withdrawal of the British minister, Lord Stormont, from Paris. The following notice of this event appears in the historical chronicle in the Gentleman's Magazine for April 1778: 'Dr Franklin, the instant Lord Stormont quitted his house at Paris, entered it, and instead of the Hôtel d'Angleterre, it is called the Hôtel d'Amérique.' The house here spoken of was in all likelihood adopted by Franklin and his associates only as a place for negotiating public business. His private dwelling was at Passy during the whole of his sojourn in France.

Hitherto, the American commissioners had been secretly treated with by the French court; but now a formal recognition of their authority took place. On this occasion, Franklin went by invitation to the palace of Versailles, where he was presented to the king by the Count de Vergennes, Minister for Foreign Affairs. It is related by a French historian that the age, venerable appearance, simplicity of dress, and character of Franklin conspired to render him an object of the warmest regard, on his presentation to Louis XVI. and his courtiers. In the evening, he was introduced to the queen, Marie Antoinette, and other members of the royal family, by whom he was received with the greatest politeness and affability. We learn from collateral evidence that on this interesting occasion Franklin wore a suit of Manchester velvet. It was the same suit which he had happened to wear upon the day on which he was made the object of the scandalous attack by Wedderburn before the British Privy-council; and we may therefore conclude that he had laid aside and preserved it, to be afterwards worn on such occasions of peculiar honour as the present.

The dress which Franklin wore upon this occasion has been a subject of literary controversy-one party insisting that he appeared in a suit of black cloth, in consequence of the court of France at the time being in mourning; while another party maintains that he was dressed in the old suit of Manchester velvet. It is alleged, that before previously alluded to. signing the treaty, he left the room for a few minutes to change his dress, and that on his reappearance in the velvet garments, he indulged in a malignant invective against the British monarchy. This, however, has been satisfactorily disproved (see correspondence in the Gentleman's Magazine, July 1785); and the simple truth seems to be that he did wear the old suit of Manchester velvet, having dressed himself in it for the occasion, but that he vented no ungenerous remarks against either the British sovereign or his ministers. A small degree of excusable vanity or personal pride seems to have been the sole cause of his appearing in a dress in which his feelings had suffered unmerited outrage.

On the 14th of September 1778, the commission of which Franklin was a member was dissolved, and he was appointed by Congress minister-plenipotentiary from the United States to the court of Versailles. Mr Adams, the successor of Mr Deane, returned home, and Mr Lee held the appointment of commissioner to the court of Spain. We are furnished with a pleasing view of the benevolence and universal philanthropy of Franklin's character, in a circumstance which occurred at this period. While the war was still vigorously carried on betwixt Britain and America,

and while American privateers were sweeping the seas of the enemy's merchant vessels, fears were entertained that the vessel of Captain Cook, then returning from circumnavigating the globe, might fall into the hands of the Americans. To relieve as far as possible the general solicitude on this point, as well as to satisfy his own generous feelings, Franklin issued the following official letter:

'To all Captains and Commanders of armed ships, acting by commission from the Congress of the United States of America, now in war with Great Britain.

'GENTLEMEN—A ship having been fitted out from England before the commencement of this war to make discoveries of new countries in unknown seas. under the conduct of that most celebrated navigator, Captain Cook—an undertaking truly laudable in itself, as the increase of geographical knowledge facilitates the communication between distant nations, in the exchange of useful products and manufactures. and the extension of arts whereby the common enjoyments of human life are multiplied and augmented, and science of other kinds increased, to the benefit of mankind in general; this is therefore most earnestly to recommend to every one of you, that in case the said ship, which is now expected in the European seas on her return, should happen to fall into your hands, you would not consider her an enemy, nor suffer any plunder to be made of the effects contained in her, nor obstruct her immediate return to England, by detaining her or sending her into any other port of Europe or America, but that

you would treat the said Captain Cook and his people with all civility and kindness, affording them, as common friends to mankind, all the assistance in your power which they may happen to stand in need of. In so doing, you will not only gratify the generosity of your own dispositions, but there is no doubt of your obtaining the approbation of the Congress and your own American owners.—I have the honour to be, gentlemen, your most obedient, &c.

## B. FRANKLIN,

Minister plenipotentiary from the Congress of the United States to the Court of France.'

The generous proceeding of Dr Franklin in writing this letter became well known in England, and the sentiments it manifested were so much approved of by the government there, that when the narrative of Cook's voyage was printed, the Admiralty sent to Dr Franklin a copy of it in three volumes quarto, accompanied with a very polite letter from Lord Howe, signifying that the present was made with His Majesty's express approbation. And the Royal Society having, in honour of that illustrious navigator, who was one of their members, struck some gold medals to be distributed among his friends and the friends of the voyage, one of these medals was also sent to Dr Franklin by order of the Society, together with a letter from their president, Sir Joseph Banks, expressing likewise that it was sent with the approbation of His Majesty.

The humiliating intelligence of Burgoyne's defeat occasioned dismay in Great Britain. Till this event, the Americans were spoken of in the most contemp-

tuous terms. Both the ministry and the people now considerably changed their tone. The most ample concessions were proposed; but it was too late. The British government endeavoured to accommodate differences by commissioning confidential agents to sound and win over Dr Franklin. Their overtures were unavailing. The war proceeded until the British forces were no longer able to cope in the struggle; and to crown the triumph of the Americans, their national independence was formally recognised by George III., and the declaration to that effect subscribed at Paris in November 1782. In about a year afterwards, the whole of the American forces were disbanded, and their commander, General Washington, retired into private life.

George Washington was born in Westmoreland county, Virginia, on the 22d of February 1732, and was great-grandson of John Washington, a gentleman of the south of England, who had emigrated to America about the middle of the seventeenth The education of voung Washington century. extended only to the reading of English and some of the more practical branches of mathematics. inclinations, it seems, led him to adopt a sea-life, and when very young, he obtained the commission of midshipman in the British navy, but was soon induced to relinquish that service by the pressing entreaties of his mother. After this he entered upon the business of land-surveying, and was remarked for his diligence and expertness, but particularly for a certain gravity and dignity of demeanour that would have graced riper years and a more elevated station.

In this humble phere, however, his countrymen seem early to have discovered his capacity; for, when only nineteen years of age, he was appointed one of the adjutants-general of the Virginia militia, with the rank of major. But the opinion of his prudence and capacity was still more conspicuously displayed by his appointment as envoy to the French commandant on the Ohio, to remonstrate against certain encroachments of his troops upon the province of Virginia. Upon his return he published a very clear and interesting account of this arduous mission, and was immediately appointed lieutenant-colonel of a regiment which had been ordered to proceed against the French, the answer of the commandant not having proved satisfactory. He had not proceeded far when the command devolved upon him by the death of the colonel, and his services in this campaign obtained the thanks of the legislature of Virginia. Soon after he resigned his commission, in consequence of certain regulations which he thought derogatory to the officers of the provincial troops, and retired to Mount Vernon, an estate on the banks of the Potomac, to which he had lately succeeded by the death of his brother, purposing to devote himself to the occupations of a country life.

His military bias, however, did not permit him to remain long in retirement. He was invited once more to defend the frontiers of the provinces from the invasions of the French, and his conduct during the whole expedition was so much approved, that, though only twenty-three years of age, he was soon made commander of all the provincial troops of Virginia. The frontiers being in some measure secured from invasion, he again, in 1758, resigned his commission, amidst the applauses and regrets of his soldiers.

Here might have terminated the military career of George Washington, and he might have passed the remainder of his days in the quietude of rural affairs. but for the unfortunate quarrel which took place betwixt Great Britain and her American posses-In constructing an army for their defence. the Americans bestowed the command of the forces on Washington; and the admirable manner in which he executed his trust is well known. Having largely contributed to give liberty to his country, he retired, as above stated, in 1783, into private life. Unfortunately, dissensions arose in the American commonwealth, through defects in the constitution, as framed at the termination of the war; and by the assistance of Washington, a new constitution was instituted. His services and character were so highly appreciated, that he was, in April 1789, unanimously called to the office of first President. In this important and honourable office, he rendered the country an essential service in consolidating its institutional arrangements and resources. Twice he filled the office of President. and survived his second retirement only two years. He died on the 14th of December 1799.

We may here pause for an instant to contemplate the proud position which Franklin had now gained. From the condition of a humble mechanic, he had raised himself, in a manner the most honourable, to be an associate of the most learned and powerful

He had just negotiated of his fellow-creatures. the independence of his country, and placed it on a level with the greatest empires of the earth; and in thus accomplishing what had become the leading object of his existence, was, as he informs us, disposed to ask, in the language of old Simeon, for permission to retire from the present sphere of The day on which he signed the treaty existence. of alliance betwixt his country and France, and on which he visited the royal family at Versailles, was most likely reckoned by him the most important in his life. It was not, however, the mere familiar intercourse with royalty that affected him, but the moral and civil results that he anticipated would flow from that intercourse and its causes. juvenile days, his venerable father, in inciting him to virtuous pursuits, sometimes reminded him of the cheering proverb of Solomon—'Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.' This proverb. he mentions in one of his papers, had a powerful effect in causing him to be diligent in well-doing, although he never imagined that the scriptural admonition would be fulfilled to the letter in his own case. Nevertheless, it was so: and he adds that he lived to stand before five kings, and to sit with one at dinner. to wit, the king of Denmark, whom he had visited in one of his continental tours.

The important ends of Dr Franklin's embassy being achieved, and the infirmities of age and disease coming upon him, he became desirous of returning to his native country. However, at the urgent request of Congress, he remained to execute the duty of minister-plenipotentiary at the French court until the year 1785. During the period of eight years and a half which he thus spent at Passy, he kept up a correspondence with many learned men in different parts of Europe; and here a number of his most admired papers were composed. Writing from Passy to his old friend Dr Priestley, he makes the following observation on the general conduct of mankind: 'I should rejoice much if I could once more recover the leisure to search with you into the works of nature -I mean the inanimate, not the animate or moral part of them: the more I discovered of the former. the more I admired them—the more I know of the latter, the more I am disgusted with them. Men I find to be a sort of beings very badly constructed, as they are generally more easily provoked than reconciled-more disposed to do mischief to each other than to make reparation—much more easily deceived than undeceived—and having more pride, and even pleasure, in killing than in saving one another.' Many philosophic minds have been similarly affected; but it would not be difficult to show that to make such reflections, in consequence of the limited experience of one mind, is not the most philosophic course which might be pursued. Throughout the whole of Franklin's writings, a detestation of war and love of peace prevail. In a communication to Sir Joseph Banks, shortly after the treaty of peace was effected, he has these glowing, and at the same time most just sentences: 'I join with you most cordially in rejoicing at the return of peace. I hope

it will be lasting, and that mankind will at length, as they call themselves reasonable creatures, have reason and sense enough to settle their differences without cutting throats; for, in my opinion, there never was a good war or a bad peace. What vast additions to the conveniences and comforts of living might mankind have acquired, if the money spent in wars had been employed in works of public utility -what an extension of agriculture-what rivers rendered navigable, or joined by canals-what new roads, edifices, and improvements, rendering Britain a complete paradise, might not have been obtained by spending those millions in doing good, which in the last war have been spent in doing mischief-in bringing misery into thousands of families, and destroying the lives of so many thousands of working people, who might have performed the useful labour!

While Franklin remained at Passy, he associated with many of the most enlightened men of France. The Abbé Morellet, in his Memoirs, speaks of him in the warmest terms of regard, and gives the following pleasing account of his sociality of disposition: 'There took place at this time a great void in our society at Auteuil, by the departure of Franklin. He had lived at Passy. who returned to America. and the communication between that place and Auteuil was direct. Madame Helvetius, Cabanis, the Abbé de la Roche, and myself used to dine with him once a week. He also came to dine very frequently at Auteuil, and our meetings were very gay. He was very fond of Scotch songs, and often remembered the powerful and gentle emotions he had. received from them. He related to us, that in travelling in America beyond the Alleghany Mountains, he accidentally came to the habitation of a Scotchman, living far from society, on account of the loss of his fortune, with his wife, who had been handsome, and a daughter of fifteen or sixteen years of age; and that in a fine evening, seated in front of their door, the woman sung the Scotch air, So merry as we've a' been, in so soft and touching a manner, that he melted into tears, and the impression was still vivid in his mind after a lapse of thirty years. Franklin's manners were in all respects delightful; there was about him perfect good-humour and simplicity, an uprightness of mind that appeared in the smallest occurrences, and above all, a gentle serenity, which was easily excited to gaiety. Such was the society of this great man, who has placed his country in the rank of independent nations, and made one of the most important discoveries of the age. He did not long speak in succession, excepting in relating anecdotes, a talent in which he excelled, and which he liked very much in others. His stories had always a philosophical object. Many of them had the form of apologues, which he had himself imagined, or which, when invented by others, he had applied with wonderful skill.'

It unfortunately happened that the fame and extraordinary character of Franklin placed him in a sphere above his colleagues, when acting as commissioner at Paris. As their powers in office were equal to his, it was natural that they should be

annoved by this marked distinction shown to him. It is understood that this circumstance caused Franklin to suffer a certain degree of disparagement in reference to the manner of his conducting transactions connected with the United States. Rumours were circulated of his having failed to account to Congress for all the public moneys which had passed through his hands, and that there were certain deficiencies in his intromissions. All such rumours as these have been proved to be utterly without foundation; but they gave considerable pain to Franklin at the time of their propagation. Courting examination into his conduct, he wrote to Congress, praying that his accounts might be audited; 'which,' says he, 'with the little time one of my age may expect to live, makes it necessary for me to request earnestly.' This, however, was not immediately attended to; but when it was done, no deficiency was found to exist. although Franklin did not escape the invidious detractions which most men filling public situations have to suffer, his integrity remains unsullied, and posterity has done him justice.





## CHAPTER XII.

RETURN TO AMERICA IN 1785, AND DEATH.

R FRANKLIN set out from Passy on his return home on the 12th of July 1785, A having spent nearly nine years in France as commissioner and minister-plenipotentiary from the United States. His retirement from office caused unaffected regret to the French court and all persons who had enjoyed any intercourse with him. He was so infirm in health, and so little able to endure the fatigue of travelling, from the effects of an internal complaint which had long afflicted him, that he was carried in a litter, borne by Spanish mules, which had been kindly placed at his service by the queen. In this manner, and by easy stages, he reached Havre, whence he sailed in a vessel for Southampton.

As has been already stated, Franklin was succeeded as resident American minister at Paris by his friend Jefferson, who felt the disadvantage of coming after a man so universally esteemed and admired; but he happily raised a prepossession in his favour by a ready and excellent answer to a question put to him by the Count de Vergennes. When the latter said

to him at a first interview, 'You replace Dr Franklin, I believe?' Jefferson replied, 'I succeed Dr Franklin; no one can replace him.' This was reported to Jefferson's advantage, and greatly recommended him to the French, independently of the reputation he brought with him.

At Southampton, Franklin met by appointment several friends, and among others, his son, William. It has been mentioned that this gentleman was appointed, in 1762, to the office of governor of the state of New Jersey. This arrangement seems to have been satisfactory to Franklin, but proved afterwards the source of considerable uneasiness. Young Franklin, from some reason not explained, imbibed views of civil policy diametrically opposed to those of his father and of the bulk of the American His principles were monarchical, and favourable to the subsistence of the British power in the provinces. The consequence was that he was looked upon with distrust and enmity by his fellow-countrymen, and, on the outbreak of the revolutionary troubles, was seized, and confined as a prisoner for the space of two years, when he gained his liberty by being exchanged for an American general officer who had been made prisoner by the British. It may easily be conceived that these were circumstances which seriously grieved the mind of Franklin, though, judging from letters which he wrote to his son on different occasions, he never reproached him for his principles, but, on the contrary, allowed that all human beings are liable to error in judgment—that their opinions are not always in their own power, but are often influenced by circumstances which are as inexplicable as they are irresistible. Deserted by his son in his old age, and opposed to him as a political enemy, Franklin appears to have henceforth chiefly concentrated his affections on his grand-children, formerly mentioned, of whom he had taken charge on proceeding to Paris.

One purpose for which Franklin now visited England was to see his son, after many years' separation, and to procure from him certain legal conveyances of lands in the states of New Jersey and New York, in favour of his grandson. This and other matters being adjusted, and a final adieu being bidden to Old England, Dr Franklin embarked in a vessel bound for Philadelphia, where he arrived safely—thanking God for all his mercies, in sparing him to see once more his dearly beloved country—on the 14th of September 1785.

His arrival having been expected, he was received on landing by an immense crowd, who flocked from all quarters to see him. He was conveyed to his house in triumph, amidst the acclamations and benedictions of the people, the ringing of bells, and the firing of cannon. As soon as his arrival was generally known, he received congratulatory visits and addresses from many public bodies, there being a universal desire to do him honour. Among the addresses presented was one from the Pennsylvania House of Assembly, which was in these words: 'The representatives of the freemen of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in general assembly met, in the

most affectionate manner congratulate you on your safe arrival in your country, after so long an absence on the most important business. We likewise congratulate you on the firm establishment of the independence of America, and the settlement of a general peace, after the interesting struggle in which we were so long engaged. We are confident, sir, that we speak the sentiments of the whole country, when we say that your services in the public councils and negotiations have not only merited the thanks of the present generation, but will be recorded in the pages of history, to your immortal honour. And it is particularly pleasing to us that, while we are sitting as members of the Assembly of Pennsylvania, we have the happiness of welcoming into the state a person who was so greatly instrumental in forming its free constitution. May it please God to give you a serene and peaceful enjoyment of the evening of life, and a participation of that happiness you have been so instrumental in securing to others.'

Shortly after his arrival in Philadelphia, he was chosen a member of the supreme executive council for the city, and soon after elected president of that body. In the course of the succeeding three years, he was useful in different public affairs. In the year 1787, two societies were established in Philadelphia, founded on the principles of the most liberal and refined humanity—'The Philadelphia Society for alleviating the miseries of public prisons;' and 'The Pennsylvania Society for promoting the abolition of slavery, the relief of free negroes unlawfully

held in bondage, and the improvement of the condition of the African race.' Of each of these Dr Franklin was appointed president. Many years previously he had publicly declared his abhorrence of the system of negro slavery, and now he testified that his sentiments were unchanged. In February 1789, a memorial of the abolition society with which he was connected was presented to the House of Representatives of the United States, praying them to exert the full extent of the power vested in them by the constitution, in discouraging the odious traffic in the human species. To this memorial, Franklin, as president of the society, appended his signature, which was his last public act, and one quite consonant with the tenor of his existence.

His increasing infirmities had already, in 1788, caused him to retire wholly from public life. the spring of the year 1790 he felt that the termination of his career on earth was approaching; but he was no way dismayed with the prospect of dissolu-His piety and philosophy alike sustained him. Dr Price, a gentleman in England, in writing to a friend in America on the subject of Franklin's last illness, gives some account of the nature of his feelings on this occasion. 'Dr Franklin,' says he, 'in the last letter I received from him, after mentioning his age and infirmities, observes that it has been kindly ordered by the Author of Nature, that, as we draw nearer the conclusion of life, we are furnished with more helps to wean us from it, amongst which one of the strongest is the loss of dear friends.'

There is a truth in this remark which cannot fail to be acknowledged. It was in the beginning of April that his illness assumed a serious appearance, and it has thus been described by his physician. Dr Jones: 'The stone, with which he had been afflicted for several years, had confined him chiefly to his bed; and during the extreme painful paroxysms he was obliged to take large doses of laudanum to mitigate his tortures—still, in the intervals of pain, he not only amused himself with reading, and conversing cheerfully with his family and a few friends who visited him, but he was often employed in doing business of a public as well as private nature with various persons who waited on him for that purpose; and in every instance displayed not only that readiness and disposition to do good which was the distinguishing characteristic of his life, but the fullest and clearest possession of his uncommon mental abilities; and not unfrequently indulged himself in those jeux d'esprit and entertaining anecdotes which were the delight of all who heard him.

'About sixteen days before his death, he was seized with a feverish indisposition, without any particular symptoms attending it, till the third or fourth day, when he complained of a pain in the left breast, which increased till it became extremely acute, attended with a cough and laborious breathing. During this state, when the severity of his pains sometimes drew forth a groan of complaint, he would observe that he was afraid he did not bear them as he ought—acknowledged his grateful sense

of the many blessings he had received from that Supreme Being who had raised him from small and low beginnings to such high rank and consideration among men-and made no doubt but his present afflictions were kindly intended to wean him from a world in which he was no longer fit to act the part assigned him. In this frame of body and mind he continued till five days before his death, when his pain and difficulty of breathing entirely left him. and his family were flattering themselves with the hopes of his recovery, when an imposthumation, which had formed itself in his lungs, suddenly burst, and discharged a great quantity of matter, which he continued to throw up while he had sufficient strength to do it; but as that failed, the organs of respiration became gradually oppressed—a calm lethargic state succeeded—and on the 17th of April 1790. about eleven o'clock at night, he quietly expired, closing a long and useful life of eightyfour years and three months.'

Thus died Benjamin Franklin, one of the most remarkable of the distinguished men of the eighteenth century; an individual truly original in genius, and possessing an inherent nobility from nature, which far transcended the casual distinctions of rank. The intelligence of his decease fell like a blow upon the political and philosophical world, and all joined in the lamentation of his loss. Throughout the American States the deepest regret prevailed; and to mark its respect for his character, and gratitude for his public services, Congress recommended a general

mourning for the space of a month. In France, where he had been so much beloved, the grief for his loss was equally poignant. On the intelligence being communicated to the National Assembly by the elder Mirabeau, a gloomy silence of a few minutes prevailed, and the members unanimously concurred in ordering a general mourning among all classes for three days. At his funeral, which took place in Philadelphia a few days after his death, the largest concourse of persons that had ever assembled on any similar occasion in America, followed his remains to the grave.

A lapse of a century has not effaced the memory of Franklin. His character and conduct were so intimately associated with all that is truly excellent and appreciable in human nature, that Time is powerless in shedding over him that obscurity which it gives to so many other things. His personal existence has ceased, but his name and his works live for ever. His reputation also is not confined to a spot, or to the country in which he flourished. but is spread over the whole civilised globe. of the mass of thousands of individuals who fluttered and enjoyed their little day of distinction, and who were reputed infinitely greater men than he, but who are now forgotten, Franklin rises prominent, bold, and distinct—an imperishable monument of moral and intellectual greatness. As furnishing an example to the young, as an instance of how much good may be done by one enterprising and welldirected mind, his life is invaluable. The whole tenor of his existence, justly observes one of his friends, 'was a perpetual lecture against the idle, the extravagant, and the proud. It was his principal aim to inspire mankind with a love of industry, temperance, and frugality; and to inculcate such duties as promote the important interests of He never wasted a moment of his humanity. time, or lavished a farthing of money in folly or dissipation. By a judicious division of time, he acquired the art of doing everything to advantage; and his amusements were of such a nature as could never militate with the main objects of his pursuit. In whatever situation he was placed by chance or design, he extracted something useful for himself or others. Every circumstance of his life turned to some valuable account. The maxims which his discerning mind has formed apply to innumerable cases and characters; and those who move in the lowest, equally with those who move in the most elevated rank in society may be guided by his instructions.'

The following observations on the character of Franklin and his writings are from the pen of one of the most eminent of modern critics, and cannot fail to be responded to for the correctness of their application: 'The distinguishing feature of his understanding was great soundness and sagacity, combined with extraordinary quickness of penetration. He possessed also a strong and lively imagination, which gave his speculations, as well as his conduct, a singularly original turn. The peculiar charm of his writings, and his great merit also in action, consisted in the clearness with which he

saw his object, and the bold and steady pursuit of it by the surest and the shortest road. He never suffered himself, in conduct, to be turned aside by the seductions of interest or vanity, or to be scared by hesitation and fear, or to be misled by the arts of his adversaries. Neither did he, in discussion, ever go out of his way in search of ornament, or stop short from dread of the consequences. He never could be caught, in short, acting absurdly or writing nonsensically: at all times, and in everything he undertook, the vigour of an understanding at once original and practical was distinctly perceivable.

'But it must not be supposed that his writings are devoid of ornament or amusement. The latter especially abounds in almost all he ever composed; only nothing is sacrificed to them. On the contrary, they come most naturally into their places; and they uniformly help on the purpose in hand, of which neither writer nor reader ever loses sight for an instant. Thus, his style has all the vigour and even conciseness of Swift without any of his It is in no degree more flowery, yet harshness. both elegant and lively. The wit, or rather humour. which prevails in his works varies with the subject. Sometimes he is bitter and sarcastic; oftener gay, and even droll; reminding us, in this respect, far more frequently of Addison than of Swift, as might be naturally expected from his admirable temper, or the happy turn of his imagination. When he rises into vehemence or severity, it is only when his country or the rights of men are attacked, or

when the sacred ties of humanity are violated by unfeeling or insane rulers. There is nothing more delightful than the constancy with which those amiable feelings, those sound principles, those truly profound views of human affairs, make their appearance at every opportunity, whether the immediate subject be speculative or practical—of a political, or of a more general description. It is refreshing to find such a mind as Franklin's-worthy of a place near to Newton and to Washington-filled with those pure and exalted sentiments of concern for the happiness of mankind, which the petty wits of our times amuse themselves with laughing at, and their more cunning and calculating employers seek by every means to discourage, sometimes by ridicule, sometimes by invective, as truly incompatible with all plans of misgovernment.

'The benevolent cast of his disposition was far from confining itself to those sublimer views. From earnest wishes, and active, victorious exertions for the prosperity of the species, he descended perpetually to acts of particular kindness. He seems to have felt an unwearied satisfaction in affording assistance, instruction, or amusement to all who stood in need of it. His letters are full of passages which bear testimony to this amiable solicitude for the happiness of his fellow-creatures individually; it seems the chief cause of his writing, in most cases; and if he ever deviates from his habit of keeping out all superfluous matter, whatever be the subject, it is when he seems tempted to give

some extra piece of knowledge or entertainment. So, if ever the serene and well-natured cast of his temper appears ruffled by anger, or even soured for the moment, it is when some enormities have been committed which offend against the highest principles which he professes.

'If the example of this eminent person may well teach respect for philanthropic sentiments to one set of scoffers, it may equally impress upon the minds of another class the important lesson, that veneration for religion is quite compatible with a sound practical understanding. Franklin was a man of a truly pious turn of mind. The great truths of natural theology were not only deeply engraven on his mind, but constantly present to his thoughts. As far as can be collected from his writings, he appears to have been a Christian of the Unitarian school; but if his own faith had not gone so far, he at least would greatly have respected the religion of his country and its professors, and done everything to encourage its propagation, as infinitely beneficial to mankind. even if doubts had existed in his own mind as to some of its fundamental doctrines.

'It is not, indeed, in set dissertations alone that we are to look for the evidence of his sincere and habitual piety. Feelings of a devotional cast everywhere break forth. The ideas connected with this lofty matter seem always to have occupied his mind. He is to the full as habitually a warm advocate of religion as he is a friend of liberty. The power, the wisdom, and the beneficence of the Deity are as

much in his thoughts as the happiness and rights of mankind.'

Among the papers which he left behind him, and which have been published by his grandson, there was found one entitled 'Articles of Religion,' which includes a form of daily prayer, adoration, and thanksgiving. In this species of liturgy, he lays it down as a rule that, after offering up his humble tribute of gratitude to the Almighty, he should spend a few minutes in serious silence, and then sing Milton's Hymn to the Creator:

These are thy glorious works, Parent of good, Almighty! thine this universal frame, Thus wondrous fair; thyself how wondrous then! Unspeakable! who sitt'st above these heavens, To us invisible, or dimly seen In these thy lowest works; yet these declare Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine. Speak, ye who best can tell, ye sons of light, Angels! for ye behold him, and with songs, And choral symphonies, day without night, Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in heaven, On earth join all ye creatures to extol Him first, him last, him midst, and without end. Fairest of stars, last in the train of night, If better thou belong not to the dawn, Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn With thy bright circlet! praise him in thy sphere While day arises, that sweet hour of prime. Thou sun, of this great world both eye and soul, Acknowledge him thy greater, sound his praise In thy eternal course! both when thou climb'st, And when high noon hast gained, and when thou fall'st. Moon, that now meet'st the orient sun, now fly'st With the fixed stars, fixed in their orb that flies!

And ye five other wandering fires that maye In mystic dance, not without song, resound His praise, who out of darkness called up light. Air! and ve elements! the eldest birth Of nature's womb, that in quaternion run Perpetual circle, multiform and mixed; And nourish all things! let your ceaseless change Vary to our great Maker still new praise. Ye mists and exhalations! that now rise From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray, Till the sun paint your fleecy skills with gold, In honour to the world's great Author rise! Whether to deck with clouds the uncoloured sky Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers, Rising or falling still advance his braise. His praise, ye winds! that from four quarters blow, Breathe sort or loud; and wave your tops, ye pines! With every planting sign of worship wave. Fountains! and ye that warble as ye flow Melodious murmurs, waroling tune his praise. Join voices, all ve living souls; we birds, That singing up to heaven-gate ascend, Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise? Ye that in waters glide! and ye that walk, The earth! and stately tread; or lowly creep Witness if I be silent, morn or even, To hill, or valley, fountain, or fresh shade, Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.

Dr Franklin's person, as seen at the period of the Revolution, was square-built and fat. He wore his own hair, which was thin and gray. His head was remarkably large in proportion to his figure, and his countenance was mild, firm, and expressive. He looked healthy and vigorous, which may be ascribed both to a good constitution and a temperate mode of living. He was friendly and agreeable in con-

versation, which he readily suited to his company, with a seeming wish to benefit his hearers, and at the same time possessing a rare talent of profiting by the conversation of others, and turning their hints to such purposes as he desired. He left, to deplore his loss, one daughter, Mrs Bache, who attended him on his deathbed. Mrs Bache, as we have heard, was a woman of strong mind and amiable dispositions, in which respects she bore a resemblance to her father.

The practice of frugality and industry which Dr Franklin pursued through life, and the success which attended his efforts, placed him in a condition of considerable affluence in his later years. His wealth enabled him to assist in alleviating individual distress, and also to farmer public improvements, of which he has an unremitting patron. That, in his latest thoughts be consulted the public benefit, is testified by the tenor of his last will and testament, from which we present the following extracts:

'With regard to my books, those I had in France, and those I left in Philadelphia, being now assembled together here, and a catalogue made of them, it is my intention to dispose of the same as follows:

My History of the Academy of Sciences, in sixty or seventy volumes quarto, I give to the Philosophical Society of Philadelphia, of which I have the honour to be president. My collection in folio of Les Arts et les Métiers I give to the American Philosophical Society, established in New England, of which I am a member. My quarto edition of the same, Arts et les Métiers, I give to the Library

Company of Philadelphia. Such and so many of my books as I shall mark in the said catalogue with the name of my grandson, Benjamin Franklin Bache. I do hereby give to him; and such and so many of my books as I shall mark in the said catalogue with the name of my grandson, William Bache, I do hereby give to him; and such as shall be marked with the name of Jonathan Williams, I hereby give to my cousin of that name. The residue and remainder of all my books, manuscripts, and papers I do give to my grandson, William Temple Franklin. My share in the Library Company of Philadelphia I give to my grandson, Benjamin Franklin Bache, confiding that he will permit his brothers and sisters to share in the use of it.

'I was born in Boston, New England, and owe my first instructions in literature to the free grammarschools established there. I therefore give one hundred pounds sterling to my executors, to be by them, the survivors or survivor of them, paid over to the managers or directors of the free schools in my native town of Boston, to be by them, or the person or persons who shall have the superintendence and management of the said schools, put out to interest, and so continued at interest for ever: which interest annually shall be laid out in silver medals, and given as honorary rewards annually by the directors of the said free schools, for the encouragement of scholarship in the said schools, belonging to the said town, in such a manner as to the discretion of the select men of the said town shall seem meet.

'Out of the salary that may remain due to me as president of the state, I give the sum of two thousand pounds to my executors, to be by them, the survivors or survivor of them, paid over to such person or persons as the legislature of this state, by an act of Assembly, shall appoint to receive the same, in trust, to be employed for making the Schuylkill navigable.

'During the number of years I was in business as a stationer, printer, and postmaster, a great many small sums became due to me for books, advertisements, postage of letters, and other matters, which were not collected when, in 1757, I was sent by the Assembly to England as their agent, and by subsequent appointments continued there till 1775—when, on my return, I was immediately engaged in the affairs of Congress, and sent to France in 1776, where I remained nine years, not returning till 1785; and the said debts not being demanded in such a length of time, have become in a manner obsolete, yet are nevertheless justly due. These as they are stated in my great folio ledger E, I bequeath to the contributors of the Pennsylvania Hospital, hoping that those debtors, and the descendants of such as are deceased, who now, as I find, make some difficulty of satisfying such antiquated demands as just debts, may, however, be induced to pay or give them as charity to that excellent institution. I am sensible that much must be inevitably lost; but I hope something considerable may be recovered. It is possible, too, that some of the parties charged may have existing old unsettled accounts against me; in which case the managers of the said hospital will allow and deduct the amount, or pay the balance, if they find it against me.

'I request my friends, Henry Hill, Esq., John Jay, Esq., Francis Hopkinson, and Mr Edward Duffield, of Bonfield, in Philadelphia county, to be the executors of this my last will and testament, and I hereby nominate and appoint them for that purpose.

'I would have my body buried with as little expense or ceremony as may be.

'Philadelphia, July 17, 1788.'

## CODICIL.

'I, Benjamin Franklin, in the foregoing or annexed last will and testament, having further considered the same, do think proper to make and publish the following codicil, or addition thereto:

'It having long been a fixed and political opinion of mine that in a democratical state there ought to be no offices of profit, for the reasons I have given in an article of my drawing in our constitution, it was my intention, when I accepted the office of president, to devote the appointed salary to some public use: accordingly, I had already, before I made my last will, in July last, given large sums of it to colleges, schools, building of churches, &c.; and in that will I bequeathed two thousand pounds more to the state for the purpose of making the Schuylkill navigable; but understanding since that such a sum would do but little towards accomplishing such a work, and that the project is not likely to be undertaken for many years to come—and having enter-

tained another idea, which I hope may be more extensively useful, I do hereby revoke and annul the bequest, and direct that the certificates I have for what remains due to me of that salary be sold towards raising the sum of two thousand pounds sterling, to be disposed of as I am now about to order.

'It has been an opinion that he who receives an estate from his ancestors is under some obligation to transmit the same to posterity. This obligation lies not on me, who never inherited a shilling from any ancestor or relation. I shall, however, if it is not diminished by some accident before my death, leave a considerable estate among my descendants and relations. The above observation is made merely as some apology to my family for making bequests that do not appear to have any immediate relation to their advantage.

'I was born in Boston, New England, and owe my first instructions in literature to the free grammar-schools established there. I have therefore considered those schools in my will.

'But I am also under obligations to the state of Massachusetts for having, unasked, appointed me formerly their agent, with a handsome salary, which continued some years; and although I accidentally lost in their service, by transmitting Governor Hutchinson's letters, much more than the amount of what they gave me, I do not think that ought in the least to diminish my gratitude. I have considered that among artisans good apprentices are most likely to make good citizens; and having

myself been bred to a manual art, printing, in my native town, and afterwards assisted to set up my business in Philadelphia by kind loans of money from two friends there, which was the foundation of my fortune, and of all the utility in life that may be ascribed to me—I wish to be useful even after my death, if possible, in forming and advancing other young men, that may be serviceable to their country in both these towns.

'To this end I devote two thousand pounds sterling, which I give, one thousand thereof to the inhabitants of the town of Boston, in Massachusetts, and the other thousand to the inhabitants of the city of Philadelphia, in trust, to and for the uses, intents, and purposes hereinafter mentioned and declared.

'The said sum of one thousand pounds sterling, if accepted by the inhabitants of the town of Boston, shall be managed under the direction of the select men, united with the ministers of the oldest Episcopalian, Congregational, and Presbyterian churches in that town, who are to let out the same upon interest, at five per cent. per annum, to such young married artificers, under the age of twenty-five years, as have served an apprenticeship in the said town, and faithfully fulfilled the duties required in their indentures, so as to obtain a good moral character from at least two respectable citizens, who are willing to become sureties in a bond, with the applicants, for the repayment of the money so lent, with interest, according to the terms hereinafter prescribed—all which bonds are to be taken

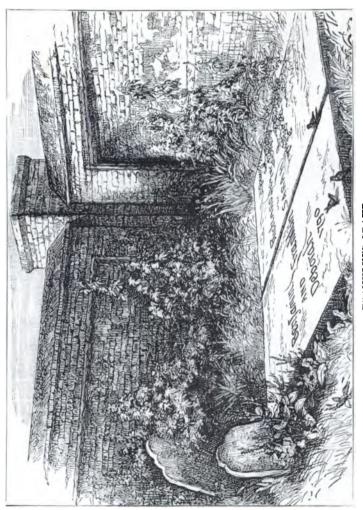
for Spanish milled dollars, or the value thereof in current gold coin; and the manager shall keep a bound book or books, wherein shall be entered the names of those who shall apply for and receive the benefit of this institution, and of their sureties, together with the sums lent, the dates, and other necessary and proper records respecting the business and concerns of this institution: and as these loans are intended to assist young married artificers in setting up their business, they are to be proportioned by the discretion of the managers, so as not to exceed sixty pounds sterling to one person, nor to be less than fifteen pounds.

'And if the number of appliers so entitled should be so large as that the sum will not suffice to afford to every one some assistance, these aids may therefore be small at first; but as the capital increases by the accumulated interest, they will be more ample. And in order to serve as many as possible in their turn, as well as to make the repayment of the principal borrowed more easy, each borrower shall be obliged to pay with the yearly interest one-tenth part of the principal; which sums of principal and interest so paid in shall be again let out to fresh borrowers. And it is presumed that there will be always found in Boston virtuous and benevolent citizens willing to bestow a part of their time in doing good to the rising generation, by superintending and managing this institution gratis: it is hoped that no part of the money will at any time lie dead or be diverted to other purposes, but be continually augmenting by the interest, in which case there may

in time be more than the occasion in Boston may require; and then some may be spared to the neighbouring or other towns in the said state of Massachusetts, which may desire to have it, such towns engaging to pay punctually the interest, and the proportions of the principal annually, to the inhabitants of the town of Boston. If this plan is executed, and succeeds, as projected, without interruption, for one hundred years, the sum will be then one hundred and thirty-one thousand pounds: of which I would have the managers of the donation to the town of Boston then lav out, at their discretion, one hundred thousand pounds in public works, which may be judged of most general utility to the inhabitants: such as fortifications, bridges. aqueducts, public buildings, baths, pavements, or whatever may make living in the town more convenient to its people, and render it more agreeable to strangers resorting thither for health or a temporary residence. The remaining thirty-one thousand pounds I would have continued to be let out to interest, in the manner above directed, for one hundred years; as I hope it will have been found that the institution has had a good effect on the conduct of youth, and been of service to many worthy characters and useful citizens. At the end of this second term, if no unfortunate accident has prevented the operation, the sum will be four millions and sixty-one thousand pounds sterling, of which I leave one million and sixty-one thousand pounds to the disposition and management of the inhabitants of the town of Boston, and three millions to the disposition of the government of the state—not presuming to carry my views further.

'All the directions herein given respecting the disposition and management of the donation to the inhabitants of Boston I would have observed respecting that to the inhabitants of Philadelphia; only as Philadelphia is incorporated, I request the corporation of that city to undertake the management, agreeable to the said directions—and I do hereby vest them with full and ample powers for that purpose. And having considered that the covering its ground plat with buildings and pavement, which carry off most rain, and prevent its soaking into the earth and renewing and purifying the springs, whence the water of the wells must gradually grow worse, and in time be unfit for use, as I find has happened in all old cities—I recommend that at the end of the first hundred years, if not done before, the corporation of the city employ a part of the hundred thousand pounds in bringing by pipes the water of Wiffahickon Creek into the town, so as to supply the inhabitants, which I apprehend may be done without great difficulty, the level of that creek being much above that of the city, and may be made higher by a dam. I also recommend making the Schuylkill completely navigable. At the end of the second hundred years, I would have the disposition of the four millions and sixty-one thousand pounds divided between the inhabitants of the city of Philadelphia and the government of Pennsylvania, in the same manner as herein directed with respect to that of the inhabitants of Boston and the government of Mas-It is my desire that this institution sachusetts. should take place, and begin to operate within one year after my decease; for which purpose due notice should be publicly given, previous to the expiration of that year, that those for whose benefit this establishment is intended may make their respective applications; and I hereby direct my executors, the survivors and survivor of them, within six months after my decease, to pay over the said sum of two thousand pounds sterling to such persons as shall be appointed by the select men of Boston, and the corporation of Philadelphia, and to receive and take charge of their respective sums of one thousand pounds each for the purpose aforesaid. Considering the accidents to which all human affairs and projects are subject in such a length of time, I have perhaps too much flattered myself with a vain fancy that these dispositions, if carried into execution, will be continued without interruption, and have the effects proposed; I hope, however, that if the inhabitants of the two cities should not think fit to undertake the execution, they will at least accept the offer of these donations, as a mark of my good-will, token of my gratitude, and testimony of my desire to be useful to them even after my departure. I wish, indeed, that they may both endeavour to undertake the execution of my project, because I think that though unforeseen difficulties may arise, expedients will be found to remove them, and the scheme be found practicable.

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If one of them accepts the money with the conditions, and the other refuses, my will then is, that both sums be given to the inhabitants of the city accepting; the whole to be applied to the same purposes, and under the same regulations directed for the separate parts; and if both refuse, the money remains of course in the mass of my estate, and it is to be disposed of therewith, according to my will made the 17th day of July 1788.

'My fine crabtree walking-stick, with a gold head curiously wrought in the form of the cap of liberty, I give to my friend, and the friend of mankind, General Washington. If it were a sceptre, he has merited it, and would become it.'

When Benjamin Franklin died, in 1790, he left to his grandson, William Temple Franklin, the largest collection of his papers. This collection, which had been supposed to be irrevocably lost, was found on the top shelf of an old tailor's shop in London, became the property of Mr Henry Stevens, and finally of the United States. From this collection and from other original documents, a life entitled Franklin in France was written.

The body of Franklin was buried in the cemetery of Christ's Church, in Philadelphia. His request had been, that he should, if convenient, be buried beside his wife; and that a plain marble slab should be placed over their joint grave, with an inscription simply of their names and dates of their interments.

While a young man, he wrote an epitaph on

himself, which was found among his papers after his decease. It has often been printed, and is as follows:

The Body

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## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,

Printer

(like the cover of an old book,
its contents torn out,
and stript of its lettering and gilding),
lies here, food for the worms;
yet the work itself shall not be lost,
for it will (as he believed) appear once more,
in a new
and more beautiful edition,
corrected and amended

For further information concerning the life and works of Franklin, see *Memoirs and Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, published by his grandson, W. T. Franklin, in 1817; also, *Franklin in France*, by Messrs Hale, published in 1887; and the *Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin*, edited by John Bigelow (1887).

THE AUTHOR.





## THE WAY TO WEALTH.\*

By BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.



STOPPED my horse lately where a great number of people were collected at an auction of merchant's goods. The hour of

sale not being come, they were conversing on the badness of the times; and one of the company called to a plain, clean, old man, with white locks: 'Pray, father Abraham, what think ye of the times? Won't these heavy taxes quite ruin the country? How shall we be ever able to pay them? What would you advise us to?'

Father Abraham stood up, and replied: 'If you'd have my advice, I'll give it to you in short; "for a word to the wise is enough; and many words won't fill a bushel," as poor Richard says.'

They joined in desiring him to speak his mind; and gathering round him, he proceeded as follows:

'Friends,' says he, 'and neighbours, the taxes are indeed very heavy; and if those laid on by the government were the only ones we had to pay, we

<sup>\*</sup> A preliminary address to the Pennsylvania Almanac, entitled 'Poor Richard's Almanac for the year 1758.'

might more easily discharge them; but we have many others, and much more grievous to some of us. We are taxed twice as much by our idleness, three times as much by our pride, and four times as much by our folly; and from these taxes the commissioners cannot ease or deliver us by allowing an abatement. However, let us hearken to good advice, and something may be done for us; "God helps them that help themselves," as poor Richard says in his almanace.

'It would be thought a hard government that should tax its people one-tenth part of their time, to be employed in its service; but idleness taxes many of us much more, if we reckon all that is spent in absolute sloth or doing of nothing, with that which is spent in idle employments or amusements that amount to nothing. Sloth, by bringing on diseases, absolutely shortens life. "Sloth, like rust. consumes faster than labour wears, while the key often used is always bright," as poor Richard "But dost thou love life? Then do not squander time, for that's the stuff life is made of," as poor Richard says. How much more than is necessary do we spend in sleep! forgetting that "the sleeping fox catches no poultry, and that there will be sleeping enough in the grave," as poor Richard says. "If time be of all things the most precious, wasting time must be," as poor Richard says, "the greatest prodigality;" since, as he elsewhere tells us, "Lost time is never found again; and what we call time enough, always proves little enough." Let us then up and be doing, and doing to the purpose; so by diligence shall we do more with less perplexity. "Sloth makes all things difficult, but industry all easy," as poor Richard says; and "He that riseth late must trot all day, and shall scarce overtake his business at night; while laziness travels so slowly that poverty soon overtakes him," as we read in poor Richard; who adds, "Drive thy business, let not that drive thee;" and "Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise."

'So what signifies wishing and hoping for better times? We may make these times better if we "Industry needs not wish," as bestir ourselves. poor Richard says; and "He that lives upon hope will die fasting." "There are no gains without pains; then help hands, for I have no lands; or if I have, they are smartly taxed;" and, as poor Richard likewise observes, "He that hath a trade hath an estate, and he that hath a calling hath an office of profit and honour;" but then the trade must be worked at, and the calling well followed, or neither the estate nor the office will enable us to pay our taxes. If we are industrious, we shall never starve; for, as poor Richard says, "At the working man's house hunger looks in, but dares not enter." Nor will the bailiff or the constable enter; for "Industry pays debts, but despair increaseth them," says poor Richard. What though you have found no treasure, nor any rich relation left you a legacy; "Diligence is the mother of good luck," as poor Richard says; and "God gives all things to industry; then plough deep while sluggards sleep, and you shall have corn to sell and to keep," says poor Dick. Work while it is called to-day, for you know not how much you may be hindered to-morrow; which makes poor Richard say, "One to-day is worth two to-morrows;" and further, "Have you somewhat to do to-morrow? do it to-day." "If you were a servant, would you not be ashamed that a good master should catch you idle? Are you then your own master? be ashamed to catch yourself idle," as poor Dick says. When there is so much to be done for yourself, your family, your country, and your gracious king, be up by peep of day; "Let not the sun look down and say, Inglorious here he lies!" Handle your tools without mittens; remember that "The cat in gloves catches no mice," as poor Richard says. there is much to be done, and perhaps you are weakhanded; but stick to it steadily, and you will see great effects; for "Continual dropping wears away stones, and by diligence and patience the mouse ate into the cable; and light strokes fell great oaks."

'Methinks I hear some of you say, "Must a man afford himself no leisure?" I will tell thee, my friend, what poor Richard says: "Employ thy time well, if thou meanest to gain leisure; and since thou art not sure of a minute, throw not away an hour." Leisure is time for doing something useful: this leisure the diligent man will obtain, but the lazy man never; so that, as poor Richard says, "A life of leisure and a life of laziness are two things." Do you imagine that sloth will afford you more comfort than labour? No; for, as poor Richard says, "Troubles spring from idleness, and grievous toils from needless

ease; many without labour would live by their wits only, but they break for want of stock;" whereas industry gives comfort, and plenty, and respect. "Flee pleasures, and they'll follow you;" "The diligent spinner has a large shift;" and "Now I have a sheep and a cow, everybody bids me goodmorrow;" all which is well said by poor Richard.

'But with our industry, we must likewise be steady, and settled, and careful, and oversee our own affairs with our own eyes, and not trust too much to others; for, as poor Richard says,

"I never saw an oft-removed tree,

Nor yet an oft-removed family,

That throve so well as those that settled be."

And again, "Three removes are as bad as a fire;" and again, "Keep thy shop, and thy shop will keep thee;" and again, "If you would have your business done, go; if not, send." And again,

"He that by the plough would thrive, Himself must either hold or drive."

And again, "The eye of a master will do more work than both his hands;" and again, "Want of care does us more damage than want of knowledge;" and again, "Not to oversee workmen is to leave them your purse open." Trusting too much to others' care is the ruin of many; for, as the almanac says, "In the affairs of the world, men are saved not by faith, but by the want of it;" but a man's own care is profitable; for, saith poor Dick, "Learning is to the studious, and riches to the careful, as well as power to the bold, and heaven to the virtuous." And

further, "If you would have a faithful servant, and one that you like, serve yourself." And again, he adviseth to circumspection and care, even in the smallest matters, because sometimes "A little neglect may breed great mischief;" adding, "For want of a nail, the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe, the horse was lost; and for want of a horse, the rider was lost;" being overtaken and slain by the enemy, all for want of a little care about a horse-shoe nail.

'So much for industry, my friends, and attention to one's own business; but to these we must add frugality, if we would make our industry more certainly successful. A man may, if he knows not how to save as he gets, "keep his nose all his life to the grindstone, and die not worth a groat at last." "A fat kitchen makes a lean will," as poor Richard says; and

"Many estates are spent in the getting; Since women for tea forsook spinning and knitting, And men for punch forsook hewing and splitting."

"If you would be wealthy," says he, in another almanac, "think of saving as well as of getting: the Indies have not made Spain rich, because her outgoes are greater than her in-comes."

'And further, "What maintains one vice, would bring up two children." You may think, perhaps, that a little tea, or a little punch now and then, diet a little more costly, clothes a little finer, and a little entertainment now and then, can be no great matter; but remember what poor Richard says, "Many a little makes a meikle;" and further, "Beware of little expenses; a small leak will sink a great ship;"

and again, "Who dainties love, shall beggars prove;" and, moreover, "Fools make feasts, and wise men eat them."

'Here you are all got together at this sale of fineries and nicknacks. You call them goods; but if you do not take care, they will prove evils to some of you. You expect they will be sold cheap, and perhaps they may for less than they cost; but if you have no occasion for them, they must be dear to you. Remember what poor Richard says, "Buy what thou hast no need of, and ere long thou shalt sell thy necessaries." And again, "At a great pennyworth pause a while." He means, that perhaps the cheapness is apparent only, and not real; or the bargain, by straitening thee in thy business, may do thee more harm than good. For in another place he says, "Many have been ruined by buying good pennyworths." Again, as poor Richard says, "It is foolish to lay out money in a purchase of repentance;" and yet this folly is practised every day at auctions, for want of minding the almanac. "Wise men," as poor Dick says, "learn by others' harms, fools scarcely by their own; but Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum." Many a one, for the sake of finery on the back, has gone with a hungry belly, and half-starved his family: "Silk and satins, scarlet and velvets," as poor Richard says, "put out the kitchen fire." These are not the necessaries of life, they can scarcely be called the conveniences; and yet only because they look pretty, how many want to have them! The artificial wants of mankind thus become more numerous than the natural:

and, as poor Dick says, "For one poor person there are a hundred indigent." By these and other extravagances, the genteel are reduced to poverty, and forced to borrow of those whom they formerly despised, but who, through industry and frugality, have maintained their standing; in which case it appears plainly "A ploughman on his legs is higher than a gentleman on his knees," as poor Richard says. Perhaps they have had a small estate left them. which they knew not the getting of; they think, "It is day, and will never be night;" that a little to be spent out of so much is not worth minding: "A child and a fool," as poor Richard says. "imagine twenty shillings and twenty years can never be spent; but always by taking out of the meal-tub and never putting in, soon comes to the bottom;" then, as poor Dick says, "When the well is dry, they know the worth of water." But this they might have known before, if they had taken his advice: "If you would know the value of money, go and try to borrow some; for he that goes a-borrowing goes a-sorrowing; and indeed, so does he that lends to such people, when he goes to get it again." Poor Dick further advises, and says,

"Fond pride of dress is sure a very curse:
Ere fancy you consult, consult your purse."

And again, "Pride is as loud a beggar as want, and a great deal more saucy." When you have bought one fine thing, you must buy ten more, that your appearance may be all of a piece; but poor Dick says, "It is easier to suppress the first desire, than to satisfy

all that follow it." And it is as truly folly for the poor to ape the rich, as the frog to swell in order to equal the ox.

"Vessels large may venture more, But little boats should keep near shore."

Tis, however, a folly soon punished; for "Pride that dines on vanity, sups on contempt," as poor Richard says. And in another place, "Pride breakfasted with plenty, dined with poverty, and supped with infamy." And, after all, of what use is this pride of appearance, for which so much is risked, so much is suffered? It cannot promote health or ease pain; it makes no increase of merit in the person; it creates envy; it hastens misfortunes.

"What is a butterfly? At best He's but a caterpillar drest; The gaudy fop's his picture just,"

as poor Richard says.

But what madness must it be to run in debt for these superfluities! We are offered by the terms of this sale six months' credit; and that perhaps has induced some of us to attend it, because we cannot spare the ready-money, and hope now to be fine without it. But ah! think what you do when you run in debt. You give to another power over your liberty. If you cannot pay at the time, you will be ashamed to see your creditor; you will be in fear when you speak to him; you will make poor, pitiful, sneaking excuses, and by degrees come to lose your veracity, and sink into base downright lying; for, as poor Richard says, "The second vice is lying; the

first is running into debt." So "Rather go to bed supperless than rise in debt."

"Get what you can, and what you get, hold;
"Tis the stone that will turn all your lead into gold,"

as poor Richard says. And when you have got the philosopher's stone, sure you will no longer complain of bad times or the difficulty of paying taxes!

'This doctrine, my friends, is reason and wisdom; but, after all, do not depend too much upon your own industry, and frugality, and prudence, though excellent things; for they may be blasted without the blessing of Heaven; and therefore ask that blessing humbly, and be not uncharitable to those that at present seem to want it, but comfort and help them. Remember Job suffered, and was afterwards prosperous.

'And now, to conclude, "Experience keeps a dear school, but fools will learn in no other, and scarce in that; for it is true we may give advice, but we cannot give conduct," as poor Richard says. However, remember this, "They that will not be counselled, cannot be helped," as poor Richard says; and further, that "If you will not hear reason, she will surely rap your knuckles."

THE END.

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